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History of the Louisiana State Library, Formerly Louisiana Library Commission.

Harriet Shirley knowles Stephenson

Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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HISTORY OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY, FORMERLY
LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Education

by

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ABSTRACT

The history of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, was written to trace the development of the institution, from the background events which led to the establishment of the state library agency through the year 1955, and to study the demonstration method of library development as it has been used by the Louisiana State Library to extend public library service. Emphasis has also been placed in the study on the contributions of the Louisiana State Library to the professional advancement of libraries and librarianship.

Seven time periods in the history of the institution determined the chapter divisions of the study. The first chapter briefly reviews the status of public libraries in Louisiana in the early 1900's. It describes the activities which led to the legal establishment in 1920 of the Louisiana Library Commission and discusses the activities of the Commission through 1924. Chapter two covers the years 1925-1929, when library services were strengthened by a Carnegie grant to the Library Commission. A professionally trained librarian, Essae M. Culver, was named Executive Secretary

of the Library Commission. A modern public library law was enacted. Demonstration libraries were conducted in Richland, Jefferson Davis, Concordia, and Webster parishes. Chapter three describes the events during 1930-1937, when the Commission influenced educational developments in Louisiana by working for the appointment of a school library supervisor in the Department of Education and encouraging the establishment of the Library School of Louisiana State University. During the period, public library services were extended through demonstrations in Vermilion, Sabine, Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes. The period 1938-1941, described in chapter four, reviews the activities of the Citizens' Library Movement in supporting the program of the Commission and covers the Tri-Parish Demonstration, and the demonstrations of library service in Lincoln, Bienville, Natchitoches, Terrebonne, Morehouse, Bossier, Vermilion, Pointe Coupee and De Soto parishes. National recognition was given the program of the Louisiana Library Commission, when Essae M. Culver, Executive Secretary, was elected President of the American Library Association. The war years, 1942-1945, covered in chapter five, brought restrictions. At the same time, demands for library services were increased by requests from the military forces, industry, and general readers. Despite

wartime difficulties, demonstration libraries were conducted in Rapides, Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison, and Acadia parishes. A state-wide reference service for Negroes was also established. The period 1946-1950, discussed in chapter six, brought a change in the name of the institution from the Louisiana Library Commission to the Louisiana State Library. Readers' services were expanded, a film service was inaugurated, and public library service was extended through demonstrations in Washington, Lafayette, Livingston, Lafourche, Iberia, Beauregard, Evangeline, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Jefferson, St. Tammany parishes and the State Penitentiary. The final chapter, seven, covers the years 1951-1955. Regional library service to the blind was strengthened by State financial support. Demonstration libraries were conducted in Franklin, Claiborne, Iberville, Tensas, La Salle, Caldwell, St. Mary, East Carroll, St. Martin, and St. Charles parishes. The study is concluded with an account of the action of the Louisiana Legislature and the Louisiana Building Authority in financing and authorizing the construction of a new building for the Louisiana State Library.

The public relations program, which permeated all phases of the activities of the State Library, is discussed in relation to each period of the history.

Sections of the various chapters describe the contributions of the agency to the in-service education of librarians and to the professional growth of librarianship.

!

CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND OF STATE-WIDE LIBRARY

Interest in the development of public libraries in Louisiana was shown by the action of the Territorial Legislature of 1805, when an act was passed authorizing the establishment of a public library in every parish.¹ The Louisiana program of state-wide library development was not actually initiated, however, until the twentieth century, when the work of the Louisiana State Library, formerly the Louisiana Library Commission, was started.²

The establishment of an agency to promote and develop libraries on a state-wide basis in Louisiana stemmed from the vision and vigorous efforts of interested citizens, organizations, and members of the library profession during

¹Roger P. McCutcheon, "Libraries in New Orleans, 1771-1833," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, 20:152, January, 1937; and Charles Dufour, "Libraries--Louisiana's Best Buy," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:80, Summer, 1953.

²First Annual Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1925-1926 (n.p., n.n., n.d.), pp. 5-7.

the first quarter of the twentieth century. The history of the Louisiana State Library would be incomplete without a record of the background of events and activities leading to the establishment of the agency which will be presented in the account to follow.

I. THE STATUS OF LIBRARIES IN THE EARLY 1900'S

The ideal of "books for all the people and for everybody a love of books"³ existed in the minds of citizens interested in libraries and library lenders in Louisiana in the early 1900's, even though there were in the state only "a few, so-called public libraries operated by subscriptions; the Jennings Library, which was a Carnegie institution; the New Orleans Public Library, inadequately supported by public funds; and the school and college libraries."⁴

As early as 1909 an awareness of the need to plan for the future development of libraries permeated the thinking of the members of the profession. Evidence of the professional attitude of the period is shown by the activities

³Margaret M. Reed, "Early History of the Library Movement in Louisiana," Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1938), p. 32.

⁴Ibid., p. 26.

of the New Orleans Library Club in initiating a meeting to organize the Louisiana State Library Association "for the consideration of questions of vital interest to all."⁵

The invitation to library boards and librarians of Louisiana issued by Helen Wells Dodd, president of the New Orleans Library Club, stated:

The New Orleans Library Club has, since its organization, cherished the hope that the time might come when librarians and Boards of Directors of Louisiana libraries might co-operate in a State Library Association, for the consideration of questions of vital interest to all.

The opportunity to form such an Association has been unexpectedly presented in the expression of a desire on the part of Mr. Chalmers Hadley, Secretary of the American Library Association, to visit Louisiana with the hope of stimulating library work.

The New Orleans Library Club therefore very earnestly asks you to signify at once if you would be willing to come to New Orleans for at least a day and a half, about December 1st, to meet Mr. Hadley and to effect such an organization.

The Tulane University of Louisiana, through its President, Dr. E. B. Craighead, extends an invitation to the conference to meet in Gibson Hall on the campus; and it is the desire of the New Orleans Library Club to act only in the matter of introducing librarians to one another.

Our State is undoubtedly facing a great opportunity,

⁵Letter from Helen Wells Dodd to Library Boards and Librarians of Louisiana, November 5, 1909 (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library). (Mimeographed.)

both in the coming of Mr. Hadley, and in the opportunity to follow other Southern States in organizing a State Library Association.

Will you not make such an organization possible by your co-operation?⁶

At a meeting held at Tulane University on December 10 and 11, 1909, the Louisiana State Library Association was organized.⁷ In the principal address to the first session of the conference, George Hathaway, Mayor of Jennings and President of the Jennings Public Library Board, issued a strong plea for arousing state interest in library work.⁸ The conference emphasized the purpose and value of a state organization, the need for training for librarianship, the place of the library in the community, how to get a library in a town, the relationship of the school and public library, the need for a good library law, and the importance of giving publicity to the library movement.⁹

The roll call of this first state-wide conference of librarians, boards of trustees, and clubs interested in library development indicated the interest and participation

⁶Ibid.

⁷"Minutes of the Louisiana State Library Association, December 10 and 11, 1909" (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library), p. 3.

⁸Ibid., p. 2.

⁹Ibid., pp. 3-9.

of the following Louisiana libraries and Women's Clubs:

Alexandria Public Library, Amite Public Library, Abbeville Public Library, Louisiana State University Library, Jennings Public Library, Napoleonville Public Library, Howard Memorial Library, Tulane University Library, Newcomb College Library, Tulane Medical Library, Woman's League, Art and Literature Chapter of the Woman's League, and the Era Club. In addition to the foregoing, there were delegates from Kingsley House, and from the Newman Manual Training School.¹⁰

The leadership of Chalmers Hadley, Secretary of the American Library Association, was evident throughout the meeting in his talk on "The Function and Value of a State Library Association," in comments on issues considered by a group, and in professional recommendations. At the conclusion of the meeting Hadley congratulated the group on its sincerity of purpose and made the following suggestions:

. . . that the Louisiana Association would send a representative to the annual meetings of the American Library Association, feeling sure that much inspiration might be had by their so doing. He further suggested that the Association send notices of their meetings to the library journals; that they print their proceedings when money could be devoted to this purpose; that the Association appoint a delegate to the convention of the Federation of Women's Clubs; also to the State Teachers' Convention.¹¹

Chalmers Hadley "showed conclusively the great necessity for an association which would have in mind the forming of a commission."¹²

¹⁰Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹Ibid., p. 9.

¹²Ibid., p. 7.

The Louisiana State Library Association took action at its first meeting to have a Legislative Committee "appointed to draft a bill to present to the Legislature at its next session with the object of securing a library law for the state."¹³

The Association worked effectively to draft a library law, and legislation was passed in the 1910 session of the Louisiana Legislature.¹⁴ The law provided for the establishment of public libraries, the organization of library boards, and the financing of libraries from public funds.¹⁵

The relationship of the Louisiana State Library Association to the general pattern of library development is shown in the purposes of the organization as stated in its Constitution:

The purpose and object of this association is to establish a State library organization; to hold conventions and meetings in various parts of the State of Louisiana, for the purpose of having librarians, and other people interested in library work, instructed and made better acquainted with the most advanced

¹³Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁴Act No. 149 of 1910. Louisiana Legislature. See Appendix for text of act, pp. 437-39.

¹⁵Ibid.

theories of the work; to form and assist in the formation of libraries throughout the State.¹⁶

II. LOUISIANA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ADVOCATED A STATE LIBRARY COMMISSION

The importance of having a state library commission to give library leadership and to assist in the formation of libraries throughout the state was one of the outstanding issues of the second conference of the Louisiana State Library Association.¹⁷ At this conference Helen Wells Dodd presented a paper on "What a State Library Commission Can Do for Louisiana,"¹⁸ An animated discussion "took place on desirable initial steps towards securing a commission, considering present conditions, and forces already at work in the state."¹⁹ Action was taken by the Association in favor of appointing a temporary legislative committee "to consider

¹⁶Louisiana State Library Association, Constitution of the Louisiana State Library Association (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 1909), article 2.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸"Minutes of the Louisiana State Library Association, April 21-22, 1911" (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library), p. 3.

¹⁹Ibid.

the advisability of applying for a library commission from the next General Assembly."²⁰

The second conference of the Louisiana State Library Association also took favorable action on acquiring "by purchase and gift, a collection of books to be circulated in the form of traveling libraries, as an object lesson and for the purpose of stimulating interest."²¹

The keynote address of the third biennial meeting of the Louisiana State Library Association presented by William Beer, President of the Association, again focused attention on library extension in Louisiana, "urging the importance of securing a library commission for the state."²² Further discussion of the need for a state library commission followed the presentation of a paper by Inez Mortland of Louisiana State University on "The Work of State Library Commissions."²³

In reporting the work of the Traveling Library Committee, "it was reiterated that the purpose of the Association in sending out these libraries was primarily to awaken

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 5.

²²"Minutes of the Louisiana State Library Association, April 11-12, 1913" (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library), p. 1.

²³Ibid.

interest in the library movement and arouse a desire for state help."²⁴

The efforts of the Louisiana State Library Association to secure a state agency to extend library services in the state were interrupted by the outbreak of World War I, "and the Association was dormant for ten years."²⁵

III. LOUISIANA FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

SUPPORTED LIBRARY PROGRAM

The Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs assumed the responsibility for the further development of library service in 1915, when the president of the Federation appointed Harriet S. Daggett "to work out a traveling library program."²⁶ The activities of Harriet Daggett brought a new impetus to the traveling libraries, as indicated by a report of her work.

Mrs. Daggett took a very active interest in the project. She secured donations for the purchase of books from individuals and clubs. She went to New Orleans and secured from Mr. Beer the collection he had in charge (from the Louisiana State Library Association). She had boxes made for the shipment of books and soon had the libraries traveling. She reported a change in the attitude of those favored with loans. Nearly all were prompt to return the boxes and

²⁴Ibid., p. 3. ²⁵Reed, op. cit., p. 28. ²⁶Ibid.

for a second shipment. She had more requests for books than she could respond to. This is significant because it shows the increasing interest in reading.²⁷

At the close of World War I, the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs was contacted concerning the disposition of about 3,000 volumes which had been placed by the American Library Association at Camp Beauregard in Alexandria, Louisiana.²⁸ Louise Singley, as the representative of the American Library Association, conferred with Mrs. A. F. Storm, the president of the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs, and offered these books to any state agency that would form an organization to care for them. This opportunity to secure the book collection for Louisiana was an impetus to the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs in working for the establishment of the Louisiana Library Commission.²⁹

IV. LEGISLATION PASSED CREATING THE LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Upon the advice of Louise Singley, a movement was started by the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs for the establishment of the Library Commission.³⁰

The energetic efforts of the leaders of the

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

Federation were brought to bear on the Louisiana Legislature during the session of 1920.

Mrs. Storm spent most of the session in Baton Rouge. Mrs. John D. Wilkinson of Shreveport, Mrs. Joseph E. Friend of New Orleans, Mrs. D. D. Daggett of Jennings, Miss Katherine Hill of Baton Rouge, and Mrs. Storm all contributed to pay the expenses of the campaign. Miss Elizabeth West of the Texas State Library came to Baton Rouge and appeared before the Education Committee of the House of Representatives in behalf of the bill.³¹

The bill to create the Louisiana Library Commission was introduced in the House of Representatives by Scott Wilkinson of Caddo Parish and in the Senate by Ventress Smith, by request.³²

The bill provided, among other things, for the appointment of a Commission of five members, two of them women; the employment of an executive secretary, who must be a trained and experienced librarian; and an appropriation of \$5000 for the work. The bill was reported unfavorably by the Education Committee of the House, but Mrs. Storm secured a minority report which brought it before the House for consideration. She was advised that the bill could not pass with the appropriation clause and it was withdrawn and again submitted, without the appropriation, by Mr. J. H. Heinen of Jefferson Davis Parish. In this form it passed both Houses. Mrs. Lydia Wickliffe Holmes was one of those who assisted materially in securing the passage of the bill.³³

The powers and duties of the Commission were stated in Act No. 225 of 1920:

³¹Ibid., pp. 28-29.

³²Reed, op. cit., p. 29.

³³Ibid.

. . . The work of the Commission shall be to give advice to all schools, State institutional and free public libraries, and to all communities in the State which may propose to establish libraries, as to the best means of establishing and administering them, selecting and cataloging books, and other details of library management. It may send any of its members to aid in the organization of such libraries or to assist in the improvement of those already established. It may also receive gifts of books, money, or other property, which may be used or held in trust for the purpose or purposes given; may purchase and operate traveling libraries, and circulate such libraries within the State among communities, libraries, schools, colleges, universities, library associations, study clubs, and charitable and penal institutions, under such conditions and rules as the Commission may deem necessary to protect the interest of the State and best increase the efficiency of the service it is expected to render the public. It may publish lists and circulars of information, and may cooperate with other Library Commissions and libraries in the publication of documents, in order to secure the most economical administration of the work for which it was formed. It may conduct courses or schools of library instruction and hold library institutes in various parts of the State, and cooperate with others in such schools or institutes. It may also conduct a clearing house for periodicals for free gift to local libraries and shall perform such other service in behalf of public libraries as it may consider for the best interest of the State.

In connection with and under the supervision of each normal school in the State and the President of the State University the Commission may arrange for a course of lectures every year at each of the said normal schools and the said State University on book selection, the use and care of books and the cataloging and administration of school libraries. It may cooperate with the State Board of Education in devising plans for the care of school libraries, in aiding teachers in school library administration, and in formulating rules and regulations governing the use of such libraries throughout the State. Such suggestions, rules, and regulations for school

libraries are to be promulgated through the State Supervisor of Public Education.³⁴

V. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

Following the adjournment of the 1920 session of the Legislature, Governor Parker appointed a library commission.

Mrs. Storm called upon Governor John M. Parker and suggested the names of five persons to be appointed on the commission. They were: Rabbi David Fichman, New Orleans; Professor R. W. Hayes, of Tulane University, New Orleans; Mrs. D. D. Daggett, Jennings; Miss Katherine Hill and Mrs. A. G. Reed, Baton Rouge. Commissions were issued to all five.³⁵

VI. INITIAL ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

The initial efforts of the Commission reflected the personal interest and generosity of the members, who for several years paid their own expenses when they attended meetings, since there was no appropriation for the work of the Commission.³⁶

At the first meeting of the Commission, held in New Orleans, David Fichman was elected Chairman of the Commission, and Katherine Hill was elected Secretary-Treasurer.³⁷

³⁴Act No. 225 of 1920. Louisiana Legislature. Section 4.

³⁵Reed, loc. cit.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

The American Library Association shipped the 3,000 books from Camp Beauregard to the Louisiana Library Commission in Baton Rouge.

. . . the two local members of the Commission were confronted with an assignment of over thirty boxes of books and a freight bill of over \$30.00. At this point, Miss Hill and Mrs. Reed interviewed President T. D. Boyd at Louisiana State University and he quite willingly assigned storage space for the books in the Hill Memorial Library, and when the books were delivered paid the bill for freight and drayage. If he expected to collect the amount at some future time, he never attempted to do so. The bill was never presented to the Commission.³⁸

The 1922 session of the Louisiana Legislature appropriated \$1,000.00 for the work of the Commission, and with this fund Katherine Hill and Margaret M. Reed began the organization of the books which formed the collection of the Louisiana Library Commission.³⁹

The books from Camp Beauregard, augmented by a few hundred which had been a part of the traveling library collection sponsored by the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs, were unpacked and shelved. The services of a cataloger were secured, supplies were purchased, and the collection was classified during the summer of 1922.⁴⁰

The appropriation for the Library Commission was soon

³⁸Ibid., pp. 29-30.

³⁹Ibid., p. 30.

⁴⁰Ibid.

spent, and various personal duties interfered with the library activities of the members of the Commission.⁴¹

Dr. Fichman was too occupied with the duties of his profession to give much time; Professor Hayes had left the state; Mrs. Daggett was . . . immersed in family cares (and unable to serve). Miss Hill and Mrs. Reed resolved to resign, and Miss Hill wrote Governor Fuqua to that effect.⁴²

The outlook for the Library Commission was generally discouraging, when G. P. Wyckoff of the faculty of Tulane University presented the case of the Louisiana Library Commission to the President of the League of Library Commissions, Milton J. Ferguson. The state of Louisiana was then considered for a Carnegie grant to demonstrate library service on a state-wide basis.⁴³

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 30-31.

CHAPTER II

LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS SELECTED

LOUISIANA FOR STATE LIBRARY

DEMONSTRATION (1925-1929)

Library development in Louisiana was advanced during the years of 1925 through 1929 by a Carnegie grant to the Louisiana Library Commission for a state-wide library demonstration, the enactment of a modern library law, demonstrations of library service in four parishes in the State, and noteworthy professional accomplishments. These developments are elaborated in the sections to follow.

I. MILTON J. FERGUSON, PRESIDENT OF THE LEAGUE OF LIBRARY COMMISSIONS, VISITED LOUISIANA

During the mid-winter meetings of the American Library Association in 1924 and 1925, the League of Library Commissions presented to the Carnegie Corporation a plan for a state demonstration of library service for promotional and educational purposes. "The outcome of the negotiations was an offer to the League of a fund of \$50,000.00 to be used

during a period of three years to promote library development."¹

"With the money assured, the next consideration was the selection of the state in which to work."² Through the good offices of G. P. Wyckoff of the faculty of Tulane University, the library situation in Louisiana was brought to the attention of the League of Library Commissions.³ In March of 1925, Milton J. Ferguson, President of the League of Library Commissions, visited Louisiana to study the potential for library development in the state, and "to learn whether Louisianians were convinced of the value of the work and ready to become the subject of a state-wide effort to make libraries grow under modern intensive cultivation."⁴

During the investigation of Louisiana's potential for state-wide library development, interviews were arranged for Ferguson with members of the library profession,

¹Milton J. Ferguson, "Why Louisiana?" Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration, 1925-1930, by the Louisiana Library Commission (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 8.

²Ibid.

³Margaret M. Reed, "Early History of the Library Movement in Louisiana," Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1938), p. 31.

⁴Ferguson, op. cit., p. 9.

interested citizens, the President of the Federation of Women's Clubs, and Katherine Hill and Margaret M. Reed of the Louisiana Library Commission. "Finally Governor Henry Fuqua was reached in his executive chambers in Baton Rouge."⁵ The interview with Governor Fuqua was considered "very satisfactory to all."⁶ It was agreed that, if Louisiana were selected to receive the Carnegie grant for the state library demonstration, the Governor would appoint a full Library Commission; and Ferguson, as the representative of the League of Library Commissions, would act in an advisory capacity in the employment of an Executive Secretary to direct the state-wide demonstration of library service of the Louisiana Library Commission.⁷

II. CARNEGIE CORPORATION GRANT TO THE LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Thirteen states were eager to be considered for the Carnegie grant for a state library demonstration.⁸ The committee serving with Ferguson in selecting an appropriate state for the project agreed that Louisiana seemed to combine

⁵Ibid. ⁶Reed, loc. cit.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ferguson, loc. cit.

many of the requirements set by the League, namely,

. . . it had a fairly workable state library commission law, which, however, was not operating because of lack of funds; it was assuredly well toward the bottom of the class in library development, but at the same time it had a few influential citizens who were interested in the project.⁹

Ferguson was also impressed with the fact that Louisiana had a public library law and few existing public libraries, and he stated that regardless of the advantages that other states might offer, he "was not long in deciding that Louisiana with her simple law and no libraries to be uprooted, presented the best field for the experiment."¹⁰

In accordance with his agreement with Ferguson, Governor Fuqua made the appointments of the necessary members of the Library Commission. Those appointed by the Governor were:

. . . two of the original members, Miss Hill and Mrs. Reed, of Baton Rouge; Dr. G. P. Wyckoff of Tulane University, New Orleans; Miss Eleanor McMain of Kingsley House, New Orleans, and Mr. Forrest White, Superintendent of Schools of Calcasieu Parish.¹¹

At a meeting of the Commission held in Baton Rouge

⁹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹⁰Milton J. Ferguson, "A Quarter of A Century After," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:35, Spring, 1950.

¹¹Reed, op. cit., p. 35.

in April, 1925, the offer of the Carnegie grant of \$50,000.00 for a state library demonstration was made to the Louisiana Library Commission by Milton J. Ferguson, as representative of the League of Library Commissions; and the offer was accepted by the Louisiana Library Commission.¹²

III. ESSAE MARTHA CULVER NAMED EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Upon the recommendation of Milton J. Ferguson, Essae Martha Culver was invited to become Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, a choice which was later described by Ferguson as "one of the most influential elements in the program of library development"¹³ in Louisiana.

A graduate of Pomona College, Claremont, California, with professional library training from the New York State Library School of Albany, New York, and broad experience in various phases of library service including assistant librarian of Pomona College, librarian of Salem (Oregon) Public Library, librarian of Glenn, Butte, and Merced counties in

¹²Ferguson, loc. cit.

¹³Milton J. Ferguson, "Why Louisiana?" Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration, 1925-1930, by the Louisiana Library Commission (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 10.

California, and library visitor for the California State Library, Essae M. Culver came to Louisiana to organize a new state-wide library program.¹⁴

The newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission arrived in Baton Rouge to assume her duties in July, 1925. On arrival she found the following conditions:

. . . not only a dearth of books but a lack of space for an office. Quarters were offered at Louisiana State University for the new addition to the official family; however, since the campus was four miles from the capitol and one of the objects was to serve the legislators, this offer was refused with regret. The president of LSU, impressed with this lusty new infant in Louisiana's educational set-up, appealed personally in the library's behalf to the governor of Louisiana. Space was found in the old capitol and the new venture was insconced [sic] in what was called the old office of the adjutant general.

This only partly solved the problem. There was, of course, no library furniture, but Miss Culver refused to be daunted. She borrowed a desk, a chair and a typewriter and set to work. . . .¹⁵

¹⁴Cary J. Richardson, "Pomona College Honors Essae M. Culver," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:131, Fall, 1954.

¹⁵Margaret Dixon and Nantelle Gittinger, "The First Twenty-Five Years," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:37, Spring, 1950.

IV. SURVEY OF LIBRARY CONDITIONS

The Executive Secretary of the Library Commission considered the situation challenging.¹⁶ After securing suitable housing in the State Capitol, "slowly furniture and books were acquired and service started."¹⁷ As a basis for developing the services of the Commission, an examination was made of the book collection which had been acquired by the Commission,¹⁸ and "a brief survey of library conditions in the State was made."¹⁹

The examination of the book collection revealed that most of the books "had originally been donated to war camps by publishers."²⁰ The Secretary "found 78 copies of Cotton Growing in Egypt and out-of-date books on railroading, accounting and . . . other like subjects, and very few of any value in starting a new library service."²¹ The investigation revealed further that there was no complete accession

¹⁶Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:42, Spring, 1953.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹First Annual Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1925-1926 (n.p., n.n., n.d.), p. 5.

²⁰Culver, loc. cit.

²¹Ibid.

record or catalog; and "there were no publishers' catalogs or library tools of any kind."²²

The purpose of the survey of library conditions in the State was:

. . . to reveal the extent of library development already made; to see at first hand the conditions under which existing libraries were working; to discover the type of organization which would most completely and adequately cover the field; to study the type of people in the rural districts and their interests.²³

The survey of libraries in the State revealed that there were five public libraries (located in New Orleans, Shreveport, Jennings, Alexandria, and Lake Charles), inadequately equipped as to book supply and inadequately supported.²⁴

Fifty-nine of the sixty-four parishes in the state with a population of 1,200,000 had no public library services. Conditions concerning bookstores were as follows:

. . . bookstores were likewise lacking, for only one city in the State, outside of New Orleans, had a regular bookstore. There were some stationery stores and drug stores which carried a few shelves of books, largely reprints, and a few rental collections were

²²Ibid.

²³Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 16.

²⁴Ibid.

reported, but for the most part the people were entirely unexposed to collections of books either in libraries or in stores.²⁵

The survey revealed that various women's clubs were sponsoring book collections. The Executive Secretary of the Commission stated:

A few collections were free to the public, but generally a small library membership fee was charged. One of these libraries was administered by a librarian with a summer school training.

In one of the largest communities of the State a women's organization had, with much effort, kept a free public library service going for many years. This service was financed by a small donation from the city, by public and private subscriptions, and by a monthly contribution from the Community Chest. . . .²⁶

In commenting on the library situation in university, college, and school libraries, the report on the survey stated:

While the preliminary survey did not cover the university, college and school libraries in detail, an effort was made to discover something of their status and to find the number of trained librarians in this field. Southwestern Louisiana Institute, at Lafayette, was the only State institution employing a librarian with a year's training or its equivalent. A number of institutional librarians had had a summer course and several years of experience in the libraries in which they were employed. In the fall of 1925 trained librarians, including an administrative librarian, were added to the staff of Louisiana State University, at Baton Rouge.

In the high schools of the State only two librarians were found with summer school training, and none with a

²⁵Ibid., p. 19.

²⁶Ibid., p. 18.

year's training. . . . In no school visited or heard of was there instruction given in the use of reference books and catalogs or was there an effort made to stimulate reading through the library.²⁷

The survey of the rural people of Louisiana revealed:

. . . descendants of the early French and Spanish explorers, the pure Creole inhabitants; the descendants of the Acadians who fled from Nova Scotia, as Longfellow tells us; the descendants of Lafitte, the pirate of the Gulf who terrorized all the country round, and of his followers; and those whom we know as 'pure' Americans--all mingling to form one commonwealth. And in this population were all types, from the highly-educated and cultured people to the illiterate. While, in certain sections, Louisiana could rightfully claim an unusual degree of culture, unfortunately, as one writer expressed it, she stood in the basement in regard to illiteracy. Libraries, except for the private libraries of the public school, were entirely outside the experience of the two-thirds of the population which was rural.²⁸

The conclusion reached concerning the type of library organization which would reach the 1,200,000 people of Louisiana without library service was that the parish library was the best means of providing adequate service to so scattered a population.²⁹

In discussing the decision to develop public library service in Louisiana through the establishment of parish libraries, the Executive Secretary of the Commission commented:

It was necessary to consider the best unit for organization and support of a library. There were only 19 towns with a population of 5,000 or over and assess-

²⁷Ibid., p. 17. ²⁸Ibid., p. 20. ²⁹Ibid., p. 17.

ments were low, so a larger unit was highly desirable. The government and schools were organized on the parish unit basis; and while some parishes seemed too low in assessment to adequately support a library, it was counselled by an attorney, who later revised the State Library Act to make possible the combination of parishes, to start with the parish unit. At this point a far-seeing Superintendent of Education suggested that regional branches of the Library Commission might be established thus eliminating the small parish units. At this time the regional organizations of counties had not been tried anywhere in the United States; and a state agency with regional branches had never been thought of. A few states had organized county units, but California was the only state with a plan for organizing county libraries and had been acclaimed as the outstanding model for reaching all the people in rural areas with library service. The Oregon State Librarian stated that better results had been obtained from the six-month demonstration of county library service than from years of traveling library service, and Wisconsin as well as California had discontinued its traveling libraries in favor of local organization for service.³⁰

V. SIX PROJECTS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION

In charting a plan for developing library services in the State, the needs of the people and the limited resources of the Commission were assessed, and the Commission adopted the following program:

1. That the Commission members and the Secretary give publicity and encouragement to the organization of parish libraries throughout the State, since the parish seems the logical unit for organization in

³⁰Statement by Essae M. Culver, prepared for inclusion in this study. October 15, 1956.

Louisiana, as the county is in other states, and that as much supervision be given after organization as possible by the Secretary in order to help make them successful. This supervision is especially important since there are no trained workers available to administer them, and upon the success of the first organized library depends, to a large extent, the future development in the State.

2. That, since the book resources of the Commission are very limited, large loans be made only to those libraries organized under the law and provided with location and custodian.

3. That, as far as resources allow, an informational service be given to individuals living in districts without library facilities of any kind; that package library service be given for club and class use; that supplementary book service be given to other libraries in addition to any advice and help in administrative problems requested; and that reading lists be supplied to libraries and individuals in furtherance of the adult education program.

4. That an adequate library law be formulated for presentation at the next session of the State Legislature.

5. That the resources of the Commission be placed at the service of all State officials and the State Legislators at all times and especially during the next session of the legislature.

6. That the Commission give all possible cooperation and encouragement to the establishment of a training course for librarians in the State.³¹

The Commission determined the policies of the library including the field work, studied and adopted each year's program of activities, and gave the Executive Secretary en-

³¹Louisiana Library Commission, Report of the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), pp. 24-25.

couragement and assistance in all phases of the work of the library and in the effort to create a library consciousness throughout the entire state.³²

The members of the Library Commission who served during the period of the Carnegie grant to Louisiana included: J. O. Modisette, Chairman; Katherine M. Hill, Treasurer; Margaret M. Reed; Hugh M. Blain; and G. P. Wyckoff.³³ Eleanor McMain of New Orleans and Forrest White of Lake Charles, who had been named to the Commission in 1925, resigned soon after the demonstration work started. J. O. Modisette and Hugh M. Blain were named to succeed the members who resigned.³⁴

In commenting on the effectiveness of the members of the Commission, the Executive Secretary stated, "Louisiana has been fortunate in the personnel of her Library Commission . . . each member had a distinct contribution to make and each contributed liberally and cheerfully."³⁵

Several members of the Commission who participated in the initial efforts of the Louisiana Library Commission served the cause of library development in Louisiana faithfully and for many years.³⁶ J. O. Modisette, Chairman of

³²Ibid., p. 13. ³³Ibid., p. 12. ³⁴Ibid. ³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author. October 15, 1956.

the Commission, who became a member of the Commission in 1926, served until his death sixteen years later and was awarded the Citation of Merit by the American Library Association; and Katherine M. Hill and Margaret M. Reed, who were members of the Commission from the time of its organization, were actively engaged in the work of the Library Commission for twenty years.³⁷

VI. COMMISSION LIBRARY OPENED

The Commission library was opened for service on November 1, 1925, with a staff which consisted during the first year of the Executive Secretary, one assistant, and a stenographer.³⁸

The numerous and varied requests for books and information which were received by the Commission library reflected an awareness, on the part of the public, of the Commission's program of service to readers, consultant services to institutions, and service to state officials.³⁹

The list of requests indicated that "the most

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 27.

³⁹Ibid.

pressing need was for books as an aid to business."⁴⁰ The Commission did not offer to lend fiction or children's books, except in the large loan collections to libraries. There was little indication that such books were desired by the readers.⁴¹ The variety of subject requests is shown in the following list:

. . . accounting, floriculture, stocks and bonds, interior decoration, cost accounting for cafeterias, public speaking, hotel management, ultra-violet ray, organization of chambers of commerce, community advertising, scenario writing, broom manufacture, landscape gardening, worker's education (especially for girls), salesmanship, adult education, tick eradication, luxury tax, taxation (State revenue), fence laws of different states, hosiery manufacture, Louisiana history. . . .⁴²

The professional consultant services of the Commission were developed as follows:

. . . a great deal of interest was manifested by librarians and trustees in the State library laws, and inquiries also came from them for advice on the handling of documents, check lists of serials, and buying lists. The Executive Secretary was asked to visit and advise on the reorganization and arrangement of three libraries, and different phases of library administration were presented to library boards in different parts of the state.⁴³

VII. RICHLAND PARISH LIBRARY ESTABLISHED

One of the first parishes in the State to seek

⁴⁰Ibid. ⁴¹Ibid. ⁴²Ibid. ⁴³Ibid.

information from the Commission concerning the plan for developing library service on a parish-wide basis was Richland Parish, in the northern section of Louisiana.⁴⁴

A group of club women had organized a library association in Richland Parish and were giving service from their headquarters in the high school building, when the appeal was made to the Library Commission for information on the Commission's plan for parish library service.⁴⁵

A meeting was called of people representing each community in the parish, and the Executive Secretary of the Commission was invited to explain how such a system worked and how it was financed, how much it would cost, and what help the Commission could give if the parish started such a library. Each person attending was asked to take the information back to his community and to see that his community would be represented at the next meeting of the Police Jury, when this board would be asked to pass a resolution establishing the library as prescribed by law.⁴⁶

At a meeting of the Police Jury in March of 1926, the Richland Parish Library was established by action of the governing authority. At the same time the problem of securing local funds for support of the library was considered.⁴⁷

The Police Jury budget had already been adopted for the year, so it was not possible to include in it an amount necessary to support the library. The Richland Parish Library Association came forward with the funds it had on hand and the joint resources amounted to only \$1,400, an amount not sufficient to pay a trained

⁴⁴Ibid. ⁴⁵Ibid. ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 28. ⁴⁷Ibid.

librarian.⁴⁸

A resident of Richland Parish, Mrs. Pendleton Morris, offered to take a summer course in Library Science and to accept the position as librarian at "a very small salary."⁴⁹

In organizing and developing the library service, the Richland Parish School Board provided rent-free quarters for the library.

. . . the Louisiana Library Commission offered to send a thousand new books ready for circulation, to give advice and help in organizing the service throughout the parish, and to give a supplementary informational book service.⁵⁰

The assistance provided by the Louisiana Library Commission for the Richland Parish Library during the initial stages of the development of the local institution was given before the parish library demonstration program was officially launched by the Library Commission. Additional assistance to the Richland Parish Library was given by the Library Commission six months later. Section X of this chapter covers information on the demonstration library project sponsored by the Louisiana Library Commission in the Richland Parish Library.

In commenting on the initial assistance which the

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

Library Commission provided for the Richland Parish Library, the Commission reported:

It would be difficult to estimate in dollars and cents the value of the professional help given, for several trips were made to the parish by the Commission staff, nor is it possible to estimate truly the supplementary book service, but the book collection sent cost at least \$3,000.⁵¹

Evidence of local interest in the library was shown in the work of the local librarian who "paid out of her own pocket for the assistant she needed in handling the distribution of books."⁵²

The Commission recognized that the enthusiasm of the people of Richland Parish for the first parish-wide library program did a great deal to spread interest in library service throughout the northern part of the State.⁵³

VIII. NEW LIBRARY LAW: ACT 36 OF 1926

In consulting with officials and interested citizens, and in visiting different parishes in the interest of organizing parish libraries, it became apparent to the Commission that the library law, Act 149 of 1910, was not adequate to meet the needs as a legal basis of library development.⁵⁴

⁵¹Ibid., p. 29.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴First Annual Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1925-1926 (n.p., n.n., n.d.), p. 7.

In the establishment of the Richland Parish Library the law was found to be lacking in provision for adequate financing and administration. A prominent attorney in the State, Mr. J. O. Modisette, of Jennings, who was also a public library trustee, was asked to draw up a new library law and present it to the State legislature. Library laws of other states were studied; and a new law was formulated which was adapted to Louisiana conditions and made to conform to the State Constitution. This act was passed and became Act 36 of 1926.⁵⁵

The law provided an important body to contribute to the development of the library profession in the creation of a State Board of Library Examiners with the function of certifying administrative librarians of public libraries.⁵⁶ The composition and duties of the Board are included in section XVI of this chapter.

IX. COMMISSION ADOPTED DEMONSTRATION METHOD OF EXTENDING PUBLIC LIBRARIES

In its efforts to insure a sound and permanent basis for library development, the Louisiana Library Commission adopted the demonstration method of extending library service. In the deliberations concerning the best way to develop a state program, traveling libraries were considered.

⁵⁵Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 29. For text of act, see Appendix D, pp. 443-48.

⁵⁶Dixon, op. cit., p. 38.

. . . traveling libraries were also discussed. . . . there was strong sentiment for them, since in the campaign for the establishment of the Library Commission traveling libraries had been cited as the means of reaching the rural people and the idea was very popular. It was pointed out, however, that several of the states which had operated traveling libraries for years had discontinued them and substituted demonstrations as a means of providing more permanent and satisfactory service than traveling libraries could provide.⁵⁷

The Louisiana Library Commission was the first state library agency in the United States to formulate a plan for state-wide public library development by the demonstration method, "funds for which were provided by the State Legislature, when the Carnegie fund was expended."⁵⁸

The Louisiana Demonstration method of public library development was planned, as the name implies, to demonstrate adequate, efficient library service to the residents of a specific parish or region for a designated period. Plans for the library demonstration required that the demonstration project be conducted in a local institution, which was legally established by action of the governing authority.⁵⁹

The Library Commission selected the parish or region

⁵⁷Culver, op. cit., p. 43.

⁵⁸Ibid. Also see Appendix K, pp. 460-63, Policies and Conditions for Library Demonstrations.

⁵⁹Sallie J. Farrell, "Louisiana Demonstrates Library Service," Wilson Library Bulletin, 23:611, April, 1949.

for a demonstration on the basis of existing, manifest interest in public library development on the part of community organizations or institutions. In regions where there was some interest in public library service, a field representative of the Commission was sent into the area to provide information on the demonstration program and to campaign for the legal establishment of a library.⁶⁰

An important aspect of the initial work of the Library Commission was the educational and promotional program to provide information for the people of Louisiana on the demonstration method of library development. Much of the time and effort of the Executive Secretary of the Commission was devoted to working with interested persons, groups, and communities in furnishing information on the library development program and campaigning for the establishment of parish libraries.⁶¹

Mary W. Harris, Director of the Extension Department, commented on the use of the demonstration method in Louisiana library development on the state and the local level as follows:

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author. April 19, 1957.

The transition from the state to the parish level of the demonstration idea or method, was a natural one, designed to show people just what library service could mean to a parish community. Since there were so few public libraries in the State, the average person had no concept of what books and adequate, efficient service could mean. Therefore, the Commission concluded that if the people of a parish had a functioning parish library system with headquarters at the parish seat, as legally required, and branch libraries and stations in the towns and communities, with a bookmobile to serve rural sections, a collection of attractive books, administered by a qualified parish librarian, with direction and general supervision of the project given by the Library Commission--then the people of the parish would recognize a library's value and be willing to support theirs after the year's demonstration.⁶²

Policies which were developed concerning demonstration libraries were stated as follows:

During the period of the demonstration, support of the parish library is largely provided by the state agency. This support is not in funds, but in a book collection already cataloged and ready for use, in professional supplies, in a bookmobile, in salaries of the trained librarians, and very importantly, in direction and supervision of the project. Cost to the state agency is the major part of the total outlay. The local parish authority appropriates funds for the one-year demonstration to provide housing, utilities, shelving, and other furniture, some supplies, and the salaries of the non-professional staff.

Preceding the demonstration, the police jury, which is the parish governing authority in Louisiana, passes a resolution of library establishment and appoints five citizen members of the board of control of the Library for a period of five years on a staggered basis, with

⁶²Mary W. Harris, "The Louisiana Library Demonstration Plan" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library Extension Department, 1952), p. 2. (Typewritten.)

the president of the police jury as an ex-officio voting member. By this action the library is legally established as required by Act No. 36 of 1926. During the demonstration the library board acts in a cooperative capacity, since the State Library (formerly Library Commission) gives the direction and supervision.⁶³

X. RICHLAND PARISH LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION

In initiating the demonstration method of library extension, the Commission negotiated with the Richland Parish Library Board a plan whereby the Commission would help to strengthen the branch library service of the Richland Parish Library, by sending an additional large loan collection of books and by giving parish and state-wide publicity to the service. The Commission was given the privilege of citing this parish as a demonstration of the plan being advocated for the entire State.⁶⁴

The parish library had been giving service for about six months, and while the collection was largely donated and the work was being administered by volunteers, the distribution centers had been established. The work of the Commission was largely that of augmenting the book collection and "a

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 32.

matter of giving publicity to the existing service."⁶⁵

The publicity assistant of the Commission visited Rayville, where prominent citizens were interviewed to secure their estimate of the value of the service, and feature articles were written and sent out by the Associated Press.⁶⁶

The favorable acceptance of the Richland Parish Library Demonstration was reported in numerous statements from clubwomen, laymen, members of the Police Jury, the Superintendent of Schools, and numerous citizens of the parish. The local enthusiasm evidently spread throughout the northern part of the State, and interest in library developed in several parishes was an outgrowth of the testimonials of Richland citizens.⁶⁷

The flood of 1927 reached Richland Parish in March, putting the parish almost completely under water. Under such difficult conditions, interest in library service remained high.⁶⁸

. . . the librarian, who was also a grandmother, donned high boots, obtained a boat, and each day waded

⁶⁵Ibid.; and statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview, October 15, 1956.

⁶⁶Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 33.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 34.

and paddled to get to the library in order that no one who came for books should be disappointed. . . . Two small boys, living two miles from the library, came in a boat to borrow adventure stories, little realizing that their own adventure in doing so would be told in print. As the water came up to the floor of the porch (of the library), the steps were removed in order that the boats could more easily unload their passengers, and each boat took away books to supply not only all the members of the family, but usually the neighbors as well.⁶⁹

The circulation record of sixty books per day under flood conditions, in a community of 1,499, was considered an excellent record.⁷⁰

The residents of Richland Parish were convinced of the value of library service. At the end of the demonstration period, the police jury made an appropriation to support the library. The Richland Parish Library has continued through the years to serve the people of Richland Parish.⁷¹

XI. JEFFERSON DAVIS PARISH LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION

Jefferson Davis Parish was selected for a demonstration of library service in the southern section of Louisiana in 1927. In 1908 a Public Library had been established in Jennings, the parish seat of Jefferson Davis Parish; and the

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Dixon, op. cit., p. 40.

City of Jennings through its Library Board offered hearty cooperation in the new educational venture.⁷²

Located in the heart of the rice belt in the prairies of Southwest Louisiana, the parish contained six hundred and thirty square miles, with a population of 18,999 inhabitants. The population consisted of approximately one-half western or northern people of Anglo-Saxon origin, and the other half were French-speaking people who were descendants of the exiled Acadians from Nova Scotia.⁷³

The settlers from Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana and Ohio brought to Louisiana a background of education and culture quite different from that found among the native French.⁷⁴ Many of the residents of French descent were unable to read and write the English language, and some persons were unable to speak English.⁷⁵

The Chairman of the Jennings Library Board, J. O. Modisette, who became a member of the Louisiana Library

⁷²Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 35.

⁷³J. O. Modisette, "Jefferson Davis Parish Library," Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930, by the Louisiana Library Commission (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 35.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

Commission in 1926 and served as Chairman of the Commission from 1927-1942, wrote the following account of the library demonstration in Jefferson Davis Parish:

In the fall of 1926 a resolution was adopted by the Police Jury of Jefferson Davis Parish creating the Parish Library and appointing a Board of Control consisting of five members. The Police Jury also submitted to the voters of the Congressional Election in that year a proposition to levy a one-mill parish-wide tax annually for a period of ten years for library purposes. This tax failed by a margin of about eight votes.

This exceptional showing gave the Louisiana Library Commission courage, and it was decided that the Commission would put on a six months' demonstration of parish-wide library service under a trained librarian. This demonstration was opened in Jefferson Davis Parish about February 1, 1927. A trained librarian was employed and put in charge under the supervision of Miss Culver, the Executive Secretary of the Commission.

Eleven distributing points, namely: Jennings, Lake Arthur, Welsh, Elton, Roanoke, Thornwell, Hathaway, Fenton, Lacassine, Iowa, and Thompson Schoolhouse, were selected and a collection of books was installed at each place in charge of a local custodian. At some of the points the custodian was paid a small stipend by the local community for the service thus rendered. In others the service was gratuitous. Each community furnished quarters either in the post office, doctor's office, drug-store, etc. The Jennings Public Library was used as headquarters, from which point the books were shipped and the librarian in charge worked.

The circulation was good. The Commission put into the demonstration 4,175 books. The total circulation for the whole period was about 26,000.

The French school children, usually from homes where books were almost unknown, were the greatest users. One child at Lacassine, a typical French Community, read over one hundred books. And the teacher of the school at that

point, as well as the Secretary of the State Teachers' Association, announced that there was a marked improvement in the children's ability to read throughout the entire school of some two hundred.

In some of these French homes, where the parents were not able to read, they were eager for the children to bring home the books and read to them, especially when the books contained pictures, as the parents were interested in studying the pictures with the children. Some of the children asked to have their books renewed for the simple reason that their parents were interested in the pictures; and, while they could not read themselves, they were anxious to have the children bring the books home in order that the pictures might be seen and studied.

In one of the larger centers, the high school principal announced publicly that in years gone by only about seventeen pupils in the four or five hundred in school had been able to secure a certificate from the State Board of Education for the required number of collaterals read during the year. Whereas, and as a result of the demonstration Parish Library, there were not more than seventeen in his high school that year that would not be granted this certificate by the Department of Education, because practically every student had read a great deal more collaterals than were required to secure the certificate.

In one home, where there were only two children--a boy and a girl in their 'teens--the parents informed the member of the Commission that their two children had together read one hundred and eight books in about five months and each had read the larger portion of that number, and they were forced to forbid their children from using the library any more for fear it would injure their progress in school and arrest their development generally.

The great Mississippi River Flood occurred in April and May of 1927, and brought a great depression throughout the Mississippi Valley and especially in Louisiana. The Police Jury of Jefferson Davis Parish on July 7, 1927, again submitted to the people of the parish the proposition to vote the one mill tax at a special Congressional Election, which was held on August 23, 1927

. . . and, because of poor crops, the financial depression and the idea that the people outside of the flooded area would have to be taxed additionally to support those within the flooded area, the proposition again failed.

It demonstrated, however, to the people themselves and especially to the Commission, that the people were hungry for something to read and would read good books if they were made accessible to them. As a demonstration the undertaking was a decided success, even though conditions at the time of its close made it impossible to vote the necessary maintenance tax for the library to continue the service. It cost the Commission in addition to the books something like \$1,400, but it was well worth it, and as an investment in the library development of the State was one of the best the Commission has made.⁷⁶

XII. CONCORDIA PARISH LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION

The third demonstration of library service undertaken by the Library Commission was in Concordia Parish, where a number of prominent and progressive citizens presented the matter to the Police Jury with a request that the resolution of establishment be passed and that a fund for maintenance be provided. The act of establishment was passed by the Police Jury, but the matter of securing funds from parish sources to assist in the demonstration was a difficult problem.⁷⁷

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 36-38.

⁷⁷Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 41.

The people of the fertile Delta parish were eager for the demonstration, and finally the Police Jury offered to provide \$2,500.00 if the School Board would contribute an equal amount. The school officials agreed to provide the funds, if the school tax election, which was being contemplated at the time, was successful; but unfortunately, the school tax election failed to pass.⁷⁸

Despite the difficulty over funds, the library demonstration was opened in October, 1928, with an advance of \$1,250.00 from the Police Jury. The Louisiana Library Commission provided two thousand books and the services of the librarian for the first six months.⁷⁹

As the library demonstration progressed, the people throughout the parish voiced their appreciation for the services rendered. The Police Jury was unable to appropriate funds for the library program and decided to call an election on June 4, 1929 to vote a special library tax.⁸⁰

The tax election in Concordia Parish was the first parish-wide library tax voted in Louisiana.⁸¹ The success of the tax election, under the conditions which prevailed surrounding the election, represented a milestone in public

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 42.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid.

library development in Louisiana, which the librarian in charge described as follows:

Everything seemed favorable until the spring rains in the upper valley began to swell the Mississippi. As the menacing waters crept up above flood stage a terrible depression seized the people and there was much talk of another flood. Already backwater from the swollen bayous and streams had covered the lower part of the parish and was slowly creeping toward the upper part. It became necessary to guard the levees night and day, and officials called for voluntary guards. Finally the Government sent out warnings from Washington that the crest would reach this section between June 4th and 12th. Under these conditions, the Library Board decided the election must be postponed until the flood scare was over.

In the middle of July, the Police Jury was asked to set a new date for the election, but refused to do so, with the explanation that the lower half of the parish had been under water and there had been so much seepage in the upper half that the crops all over the parish were a loss and the people could not afford a new tax at this time. This left only one hope for those interested in promoting the library. If 25 per cent of the qualified voters wanted the library and signed a petition, the Police Jury was obligated by law to call the election. Representatives of the Women's Club and the Parent-Teacher Association solicited as many as they could reach, then turned the petitions over to the Rotary Club. In a comparatively short time enough signatures had been secured, and the Police Jury set the date for the election as September 19. Much publicity was given the matter in the Concordia Sentinel and the Natchez (Mississippi) Democrat. Letters and special articles from leading men in the parish were published and circulars were sent out to all persons qualified to vote. There were many days when success appeared doubtful because of opposition, due to crop and business conditions. There were many prophecies of failure and few of success of the tax. However, on the 19th of September, as reports began to come in after the polls closed, there was great rejoicing that the merit and worth of the library service had over-balanced the unfavorable and

depressing conditions in the parish, for the tax went over with a fair majority of both voters and property valuation.⁸²

XIII. WEBSTER PARISH LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION

Webster Parish expressed an interest in developing a parish library and appealed to the Library Commission in 1926 for information concerning the State's program of library development.⁸³

The Library Commission was informed that the Rosenwald Fund was willing to assist in the development of library service in some parish in Louisiana which would meet the requirements of the Rosenwald Fund with regard to budget, trained administration, Negro service and Library Commission supervision. The opportunity was brought to the attention of a group of citizens and educators in Webster Parish who gave their support to an application for a grant from the Rosenwald Fund.⁸⁴

⁸²Bess Vaughan, "Concordia Parish Library," Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), pp. 42-43.

⁸³Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 43.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 44.

The application to the Rosenwald Fund was prepared by the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission. It set forth the conditions in Webster Parish which were favorable to the library demonstration and the provisions which the Louisiana Library Commission offered to contribute to the project.⁸⁵

The school system of Webster Parish was recognized as an outstanding county school system, with eleven centralized school plants for white children and twenty-three Rosenwald schools for Negroes in the parish. The Superintendent of Schools pledged full cooperation of the school system in the development of the library project.⁸⁶

The Louisiana Library Commission offered to be responsible for supervision of the library project, and to provide an initial collection of 1,000 books, cataloged and processed for circulation, with the resources of the Library Commission to augment the local resources, and assistance in securing additional materials through inter-library loan.⁸⁷

The Rosenwald Fund acted favorably on the application for the Webster Parish Library Project, and provided an initial grant of \$8,000 for the library. Local authorities

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 44-45.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 44.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 45.

provided an equal amount.⁸⁸

In October, 1929, the fourth parish library demonstration was opened, and the Library Commission reported:

The Louisiana Library Commission sent 1,576 books for service to the white people and 532 for the Negro service. Miss Mary Harris, who had had previous experience in county library work and who also was Assistant secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission for three years, was engaged to administer the library. A large, vacant room in the heart of the business section was rented for the headquarters library. 'Books-Service-Free to All' was the slogan adopted, and this was painted on the book delivery truck, for all to see as it traveled over the parish.⁸⁹

The demonstration, which was planned as a five year project, was considered an instant and complete success.⁹⁰

The book collection developed during the first eight months of the demonstration to 7,708, and the total circulation for the first year was 101,764.⁹¹ "The increase in the book collection was due to the assembling and cataloging of books from the local school libraries."⁹²

The service to Negroes in Webster Parish was the

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 46.

⁸⁹Ibid.

⁹⁰Dixon, op. cit., p. 41.

⁹¹Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 46.

⁹²Statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author, October 15, 1956.

first parish-wide library service to the Negro population established in Louisiana. The reports of the librarian in charge of the service indicated interest in library service among the Negro leaders. The library registered 981 borrowers and circulated 4,545 books during the first six months of the demonstration.⁹³

The librarian in charge of the Negro service had been trained as an agricultural extension agent in addition to a summer course in library science, and he combined this training very effectively evidenced by a rural parish fair at which all the products of the area were exhibited and beside each article was the book or government bulletin used by the producer. The home-makers' exhibits of canned goods, quilts, dresses, etc., exhibited books from which they obtained the dress and quilt patterns and canning directions. So successful was the parish fair that the Superintendent of Education commented to the effect that if all the people would use books and printed information as efficiently it would speed progress immeasurably.⁹⁴

Mary Mims, the Community Organizer for the Agricultural Extension Department of Louisiana State University, who later was named Rural Sociologist of Louisiana State University, cooperated with the library in organizing four meetings of the Negroes in Webster Parish to study ways of improving community life. The Webster Parish Library provided materials

⁹³Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 47.

⁹⁴Statement by Essae M. Culver, prepared for inclusion in this study, October 15, 1956.

of instruction on problems of civic, home, and economic improvement.⁹⁵

The Webster Parish Library Demonstration established a firm foundation of service. The library program has continued through the years to provide "Books-Service-Free to All."⁹⁶

XIV. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation for the state-wide demonstration of library service in Louisiana were augmented by an appropriation of the Louisiana Legislature in 1926. An appropriation of \$5,000 was recommended by the Tax Commission and passed by the Legislature for the biennium on the grounds that, if the Legislature created an institution by law, it should provide something for its maintenance.⁹⁷

The Mississippi River Flood of 1927 brought to the

⁹⁵Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 48.

⁹⁶Dixon, op. cit., p. 41. Also see Appendix, Table III, p. 457.

⁹⁷Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 31.

Louisiana Legislature of 1928 many serious problems of finance. The outlook for the continuation of the work of the Library Commission was not encouraging.⁹⁸

Due to the heavy expenses incident to the Flood, the Tax Commission felt it could not recommend a budget of more than \$6,000 to the Legislature. This was an increase of only \$1,000 over the preceding biennium. Friends of the cause in the Legislature, however, succeeded in having the fund increased to \$12,000, and this amount was approved by the Governor. This was an increase of \$7,000, or more than double the appropriation of 1926-1928.⁹⁹

In consideration of the seriousness of economic conditions in Louisiana, the Carnegie Corporation of New York extended the grant to the Louisiana Library Commission for an additional period of two years, to sustain the work of the previous three years and to insure another two years of development. Though the State of Louisiana had more than doubled its appropriation to the Commission, "it would have been impossible to keep up the standard set without the additional aid from the Carnegie Corporation."¹⁰⁰

XV. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Library Commission advocated the development of a good public relations program, utilizing the talents of the

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 39.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 39.

Executive Secretary, the members of the Commission, and the services of a paid publicity assistant to advance Louisiana libraries through the use of publicity and promotional devices. Developments in the public relations program are presented in the sections which follow.

Activities of the Commission and the Executive Secretary

An awareness of the need for good public relations existed in the minds of the Executive Secretary and the members of the Louisiana Library Commission from the beginning of the Commission's activities. The first annual report of the Louisiana Library Commission stated:

Making the Library Commission and its functions known to the people of the State of Louisiana has taken much of the time and effort of the Executive Staff in these first eight months of service and the results of such activities will be more evident in future reports than in the statistics of this first year.¹⁰¹

The Library Commission for the period 1926-1928 reported that all members and the Executive Secretary made contributions to the public relations program through addresses to conventions, securing letters of endorsement from educators, institutions, clubs, organizations, and press

¹⁰¹First Annual Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1925-1926 (n.p., n.n., n.d.), p. (5).

releases concerning the Commission and its activities.¹⁰²

An editorial in the New Orleans Item emphasizing this aspect of the work of the Commission stated:

The Louisiana Public Library commission has taken a forward step in its decision to engage a paid organizer who will visit the rural parishes, lecturing on the library-loan service and helping to establish such a service in each parish. The service is one whose value is directly proportional to the number of people who know about it and use it. The first step in increasing its usefulness must necessarily be the education of the public as to its advantages.¹⁰³

As one means of publicizing the program of the Library Commission, the Executive Secretary made a talk on the services of the Commission and the demonstration method of library development to a journalism class at Louisiana State University. The members of the class wrote articles on the Library Commission which were published in the newspapers of their home communities.¹⁰⁴

Publicity Assistant

Realizing that publicity would play an important part in developing library interest throughout the State,

¹⁰²Second Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1926-1928 (n.p., n.n., n.d.), p. 7.

¹⁰³Editorial in the New Orleans (Louisiana) Item, January 30, 1929.

¹⁰⁴Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 52.

the Commission acted in 1928 to employ as a full-time publicity assistant, Rachel Violette, a journalist with experience and a graduate of the Louisiana State University School of Journalism. The work of the publicity assistant included press releases to the newspapers of the State, feature articles on special services or projects of the library, vacation reading for children, service to business, magazine articles, and special publications, including a handbook of information on the parish library system.¹⁰⁵

Bookmobile used to publicize services

The Commission recognized the advertising value of a bookmobile, and voted to purchase and equip a bookmobile to be put on display at the parish fairs in the State.¹⁰⁶

A shelf of books was painted in bright colors on each side of a Chevrolet delivery coach and shelving was built inside to accommodate about five hundred books. The book collection selected was a model collection for a small rural branch, and was designed to show rural people the kind of books that would be brought into their community through a parish library service. No books were lent from the collection, but the library-on-wheels nevertheless aroused much interest and received wide publicity.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 55-56.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., pp. 56-57.

Exhibits

Exhibits of various kinds were arranged including: exhibits celebrating Book Week, books for parent-teacher groups, women's clubs, health, home improvement, agriculture, and art. A special display of books and posters advertising the service of the Library Commission was arranged on the Health Train, which toured the entire State and was visited by thousands of people.¹⁰⁸

Radio

Radio was used to publicize library service in a series of talks given by J. O. Modisette, Chairman of the Commission, over station KWKH in Shreveport. The series included talks on such topics as, "The Services of the Commission," "Adult Education and Libraries," "The Influence of Good Books," and "Louisiana's Greatest Need--Free Library Service."¹⁰⁹

Mary Mims, State Community Organizer, Promoted Libraries

Mary Mims, the State Community Organizer of the Agricultural Extension Department, Louisiana State University, was influential in extending the general awareness of the

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 60.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

value of library service in over three hundred community organizations in the State, with a library program as a feature of one program each year. To encourage an understanding of the services offered by the Commission, the Community Organizer planned programs which featured a paper on "What Everyone in the Community Should Know About the Louisiana Library Commission."¹¹⁰ To stimulate interest in library service for adults, debates were arranged on the topic, "Resolved: That a parish library will help men and women more than it will help boys and girls."¹¹¹

XVI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The professional growth of libraries was fostered by the Library Commission through the cooperation of the Executive Secretary in the activities of numerous professional associations, the reactivation of the Louisiana Library Association, the efforts of the Commission to secure a library school for Louisiana, and through the work of the State Board of Library Examiners. Details of these activities are presented in the sections to follow.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 61.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 62.

Program of the Louisiana Library Commission Presented to
Out-of-State Professional Organizations

The Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission was invited to speak to numerous professional organizations outside the State on the demonstration method of library development; and while only a limited number of the invitations could be accepted, the Executive Secretary appeared as the guest speaker for the following meetings:

The Midwinter Meeting of the American Library Association at Chicago in 1925 and 1926.

The League of Library Commission meetings at the annual A.L.A. Conferences at Atlantic City, June, 1926, and at Toronto, June, 1927.

The Southeastern Library Association meetings at Signal Mountain, April, 1926, and at Biloxi, November, 1928.

The Texas Library Association meeting in Beaumont, 1927.

The Arkansas Library Association meeting at Little Rock, 1927.

The Alabama Library Association meeting at Montevallo, April, 1929.¹¹²

Louisiana Library Association Reactivated

Milton J. Ferguson, who as President of the League of Library Commissions, had chosen Louisiana as the state to receive the Carnegie grant of \$50,000.00 recommended that the Louisiana State Library Association be reactivated to engage in professional activities, to further the development of

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 62-63.

libraries in the state, and to support the program of the Library Commission.¹¹³

There was only one active, trained librarian and comparatively few library employees in Louisiana when the Library Commission initiated its program under the direction of a professionally trained Executive Secretary. The Executive Secretary stated:

. . . it was impossible to form any sizable organization of librarians, so the Conference of Social Welfare, of which Dr. Wyckoff, a member of the Louisiana Library Commission, was president, invited the few librarians to meet with them, and many of the charter members of the Library Association were social workers and citizens attending the conferences.¹¹⁴

The re-organizational meeting was held in Shreveport on April 6, 1925, as a library section of the fifth annual meeting of the Louisiana State Conference for Social Betterment.¹¹⁵

A permanent organization was formed under the name of Louisiana Library Association, and the following officers were elected: President, Edwin L. Stephens, President of Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Lafayette; Vice-Presidents,

¹¹³Culver, op. cit., p. 42.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵"Minutes of the meeting of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925" (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library), p. (1).

Lois White Henderson, Shreveport, and Esther F. Harvey, Newcomb College; Treasurer, Virginia Fairfax, New Orleans; Secretary, Lois F. Shortess, Librarian, Southwestern Louisiana Institute, Lafayette.¹¹⁶

The work of a state library commission was featured on the first program in addresses by Milton J. Ferguson and Virginia Fairfax,¹¹⁷ and the Louisiana Library Association continued actively to support the program of the Library Commission. The Executive Secretary stated:

The fact that the Library Association was re-organized to give backing to the new Louisiana Library Commission will explain why the program of the State Library (formerly Library Commission) had been presented to the Louisiana Library Association from time to time for endorsement.¹¹⁸

Library Education

The need for professionally trained librarians was recognized by the Commission in its initial program of library development. An appeal was made in 1925 to the Board of Education for Librarianship of the American Library

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷"Program of the Louisiana State Conference for Social Betterment . . . April 6th and 7th, 1925" (in the Archives of the Louisiana Library Association in the Louisiana State Library).

¹¹⁸Culver, loc. cit.

Association to make recommendations as to where a library school should or could be established.¹¹⁹

Sarah Bogle, Secretary of the Board of Education for Librarianship, was designated to investigate the situation in Louisiana. In January of 1926 Sarah Bogle visited Tulane University and Louisiana State University. It was recommended that a library school be started at Louisiana State University, but since funds were not available for a graduate school, summer courses were established in 1926 and an appeal was made to the General Education Board for funds to start a full course. A six weeks course in library science was also started at Tulane University.¹²⁰

State Board of Library Examiners

The library law enacted in 1926, Act No. 36, created the State Board of Library Examiners, with the responsibility of certifying administrative librarians for public libraries. Section 12 of the law states that the Board of Library Examiners shall:

. . . be composed of three members, all of whom must be experienced and trained librarians, appointed and chosen by the Louisiana Library Commission, whose duties and powers shall be to meet and organize and elect officers by electing one Chairman and a Secretary. The

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 43.

¹²⁰Ibid.

said Board of Library Examiners shall have authority to establish rules and regulations for its government and prescribe examinations, qualifications, conditions and requirements for those seeking certificates or permits to practice the profession of librarian. That the Board shall hold at least one examination a year for the purposes of examining applicants for certificates as librarian at the office of the Louisiana Library Commission in Baton Rouge and may hold other examinations at other places in the State as may suit the convenience of the Board and the applicants. Said Board members shall be appointed and hold office for a term of four years.¹²¹

The initial Board of Library Examiners, composed of Virginia Fairfax, chairman, Mary W. Harris, secretary, and J. R. Gullett, held the first meeting to examine applicants for certification as administrative librarians in public libraries in 1927. The Board continued to function in accordance with the requirements of the law throughout subsequent years.¹²²

XVII. PROSPECTS FOR LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

As the period of the Carnegie grant to the Louisiana Library Commission for the state-wide library demonstration came to a close, parish libraries were operating in Concordia, Webster and Orleans parishes. Interest in developing parish-

¹²¹Act No. 36 of 1926. Louisiana Legislature. Section 12. Also see Appendix, Regulations of Board of Library Examiners, p. 464.

¹²²Dixon, op. cit., p. 38.

wide library service had been shown in Caddo, Bossier, Natchitoches, East Baton Rouge, St. Mary, Acadia, Jefferson Davis, Vermilion, Claiborne, Morehouse, Ouachita, Lafayette, Vernon, Calcasieu, Beauregard, Rapides, Winn, Franklin, Tensas, Madison, Jefferson, Red River, and Tangipahoa.¹²³

Caddo Parish had set aside \$10,000.00 to provide books for rural people by means of a contract with the Shreve Memorial Library in Shreveport.¹²⁴

The Police Jury of Bossier Parish had gone on record as favoring the establishment of a library, and had agreed to provide one-half the amount of the budget for the first year and requested the School Board to supply the other half of the budget.¹²⁵

A citizens group was organized in Natchitoches Parish to promote a parish library, and the project was endorsed by the Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce, various women's clubs, and several organized rural communities.¹²⁶

The prospects for a parish library in East Baton Rouge Parish were very good, with a committee working on a

¹²³Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), pp. 63-66.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 63.

¹²⁵Ibid.

¹²⁶Ibid.

budget, and a building in prospect. A bond issue of \$20,000.00 was voted some years earlier, and "in 1929 the people voted to turn over funds already voted for a charity hospital and no longer needed for that purpose to the library building fund."¹²⁷ The funds were used in the construction and opening on September 14, 1939 of a public library to serve the residents of East Baton Rouge Parish.¹²⁸

XVIII. LETTERS COMMENDING THE PROGRAM OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION

The Louisiana Library Commission received letters from numerous officials and community leaders commending the program of state-wide library development. The following excerpts from several of these letters were printed in the Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930.

Huey P. Long while serving as Governor of Louisiana wrote to the Commission as follows:

In my opinion, there is nothing that can greater serve the cause of convenience, happiness and uplift of a community than a public library. It places within the reach of every child, as well as older people, the literature which enables them to become informed, and through which they may entertain themselves more

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 64.

¹²⁸Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 21.

delightfully, and to aid their mental and spiritual development.

If I had only a small amount of money to spend on public improvements, I would put it all in a library.¹²⁹

Ben C. Dawkins, Judge of the United States District Court commented:

After some fourteen years upon the bench, the major portion of which has been in the trial courts, I am convinced that ignorance plays a very large part in cases involving violations of the law. The public library is a very potent factor for the distribution of information and I sincerely trust that its use may be extended in a manner to reach an ever increasing circle of readers.¹³⁰

Riley J. Wilson, a member of the United States Congress, representing the state of Louisiana stated:

Suitable libraries located at convenient points throughout the State would be, in my opinion, of inestimable value to our citizens. Not only is this true because of the benefits arising from placing good literature within easy reach of everyone, but also because the library gives a most practical aid to the student, the agriculturist, the business and professional man, in fact everyone engaged in useful pursuits, in that it makes available the standard reference books, textbooks, and scientific literature touching upon that

¹²⁹Letter from Huey P. Long to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 75.

¹³⁰Letter from Ben C. Dawkins to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 75.

person's business.¹³¹

J. B. Aswell, a member of the United States Congress, wrote to the Library Commission as follows:

I am very glad to note the progressive and constructive action of the Louisiana Legislature in providing for the establishment of a modern public library for our people in the various parishes and municipalities. It is a great step forward in civic, educational, and cultural development of our State. A properly organized public library administered by trained and experienced librarians is a blessing that can not be over estimated. Its need is fundamental and obvious.¹³²

President of Tulane University, A. B. Dinwiddie, commented:

It would indeed be difficult to estimate the value of such a movement to the whole State. It would open to the people of the rural districts the library privileges that are now enjoyed by those in municipal centers and would undoubtedly prove to be one of the greatest blessings in furnishing intellectual reaction and stimulus, even in the most remote homes of Louisiana.¹³³

H. H. White, President of the State Board of Education,

¹³¹Letter from Riley J. Wilson to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 75.

¹³²Letter from J. B. Aswell to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 75.

¹³³Letter from A. B. Dinwiddie to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 77.

wrote to the Library Commission as follows:

The influence of good books and of good reading is so generally acknowledged and universally known among intelligent people that it hardly needs comment. I hope that the work of the Louisiana Library Commission will be so encouraged and extended that it will reach all the people of Louisiana, and that it will prove a great factor in elevating the taste, extending the usefulness and enlarging the pleasure of our people.¹³⁴

Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette commented:

The public library has been well designed as 'the graduate school of the people.' With proper direction in the schools and inspiration in bringing home to the pupils that education is a process of continuous growth, the scope of the library and its power for good are almost limitless. The citizen finds therein enlightenment on the civic, social and economic problems confronting the country and, when called upon to aid in their solution, learns not to depend on the political demagogue or partisan newspapers to found a sound opinion and judgment on their merits. . . .

The establishment of these libraries, then, will mark quite an advance in the work of education in our beloved State and will contribute not a little to its progress along civic, economic and industrial lines.¹³⁵

¹³⁴Letter from H. H. White to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 77.

¹³⁵Letter from Jules B. Jeanmard to the Louisiana Library Commission, in Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 79.

CHAPTER III

COMMISSION EXPANDED SERVICES AND INFLUENCED EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS (1930-1937)

The Legislature of Louisiana increased its financial support of the Library Commission during the period of 1930-1937 following the termination of the Carnegie grant.

The efforts of the Commission influenced educational developments in the appointment of a State School Library Supervisor in the Department of Education, the establishment of a Library School at Louisiana State University, and the broadening of the Commission's services to readers.

Louisiana libraries were expanded on a parish-wide basis through the improvement of established libraries and through three demonstrations.

The public relations program of the Commission was strengthened through the activities of the Executive Secretary and the members of the Commission, and the organization of a Citizens Library Movement.

A record of these activities and events will be presented in the succeeding sections of this chapter.

I. LIBRARY COMMISSION SECURED INCREASED APPROPRIATION
FROM THE LOUISIANA LEGISLATURE

When it was brought to the attention of the Tax Commission of Louisiana that the funds from the Carnegie Corporation, which had supported the state-wide library demonstration program of the Library Commission, were to be withdrawn on July 1, 1930, the Tax Commission recommended an appropriation of \$42,000.00 for the biennium.¹

The report of the Tax Commission in May of 1930 stated:

Report from the Louisiana Library Commission shows an average expenditure of \$21,000 per annum. In view of the dearth of money for appropriation, the Tax Commission does not feel that it can recommend a sum in excess of that, and its recommendation is \$15,000 per annum in excess of the amount appropriated by the Legislature of 1928. However, in view of the fact, as stated in the above quoted letter, that outside aid will be withdrawn on July 1st, 1930, and in order that this meritorious work may continue on its present scale, the Commission makes this recommendation.²

The action of the Senate in the 1930 session of the Legislature brought a ten per cent cut in practically all appropriations. The Library Commission appropriation for

¹Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 51.

²Ibid.

the next biennium was \$37,800.00 or \$18,900.00 per annum.³

The appropriation of \$18,900.00 per annum for the Library Commission was continued by the Legislature until the period of 1936-1937, when it was increased for 1936 to \$26,950.00; and in 1937, the State appropriation was increased to \$35,000.00.⁴

The Library Commission reported:

While Governor of Louisiana, the late Huey P. Long made the statement before the Southwestern Library Association in session in Baton Rouge, that he considered the work of libraries of equal importance with that of the schools.

With the coming into office of Governor Richard W. Leche, an increase in funds for the Louisiana Library Commission was provided, making possible the extension of library service to thousands of citizens throughout the state; and his interest in trying to provide books for the 80% of the rural adult population entirely without libraries resulted in two demonstrations to determine the most effective way to reach over one million people now without library service.⁵

II. THE COMMISSION FOSTERED EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In working to achieve its aim of furthering the cause of education and cultural development among the people of

³Ibid.

⁴Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 35.

⁵Ibid., p. 8.

Louisiana, the Commission exerted its efforts to assist in the development of the school library program, the establishment of a graduate library school in Louisiana, and in developing reading programs for individual readers.⁶

Supervisor of School Libraries Named by the State Department of Education

Louisiana was able to begin the work of supervision of school libraries during the session of 1929-1930 with funds provided by a grant from the General Education Board.⁷ The initial efforts to secure a school library supervisor came from the Library Commission, when the Treasurer and Secretary of the Commission requested that the State Superintendent of Education "appeal to the General Education Board for funds to employ a well-trained, experienced librarian to develop school libraries."⁸

Lois F. Shortess, who received her professional train-

⁶Margaret Dixon and Nantelle Gittinger, "The First Twenty-Five Years," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:41, Spring, 1950.

⁷Louisiana Library Commission, Report of the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 66.

⁸Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:44, Spring, 1953.

ing at University of Illinois Library School and served as librarian of Southwestern Louisiana Institute in 1923-1926, was invited to return to Louisiana from Michigan, where she held the position of State School Library Supervisor, to initiate the school library development program. In the fall of 1929, Lois F. Shortess became the first School Library Supervisor in the Louisiana Department of Education.⁹

The appointment of the State School Library Supervisor brought greater cooperation between the Library Commission and the State Department of Education, since at the request of T. H. Harris, Superintendent of Education, the School Library Supervisor worked to spread information concerning the parish library program of the Commission. It was the hope of both agencies that cooperation between school and parish libraries in Louisiana might demonstrate to the entire South how unnecessary duplication of materials might be avoided and how greater book service might be provided through the combining of resources.¹⁰

The close relationship of the Library Commission to the State Department of Education was indicated by the fact

⁹Ibid.; and Dixon, loc. cit.

¹⁰Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstrations: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 67.

that the office of the State School Library Supervisor was originally located in the offices of the Louisiana Library Commission to facilitate the coordination of all library activities and resources. Later, by mutual agreement, the office of the School Library Supervisor was moved into quarters with the other programs under the direction of the State Department of Education.¹¹

Library School Established at Louisiana State University

The need for professionally trained librarians in the South was recognized in a survey of library education in the South, made in March of 1930, by representatives of the American Library Association. Since Louisiana State University had offered a summer program in library science since 1926, the survey included the recommendation that a library school at the graduate level be established at Louisiana State University.¹²

The Louisiana Library Commission exerted its influence in securing the library school.

. . . The combined efforts of the University, the

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Florinell F. Morton, "Twenty-Five Years in the Life of a Library School; Louisiana State University Library School, 1931-1955," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 18:129, Fall, 1955.

State Library Commission and the State Department of Education resulted in the selection of Louisiana State University as the recipient of a \$60,000 grant from the General Education Board to be expended over a five-year period for the development of a library school. . . . The grant was made in the Spring of 1931, thus making possible the opening of the school the following September.¹³

In reviewing the aforementioned educational accomplishments of the Commission the Executive Secretary stated:

A library school was one of the six projects adopted by the Louisiana Library Commission in the beginning, and the initiative in the matter came from the State Library (Library Commission), as did the efforts to obtain for the Department of Education a State Library Supervisor.¹⁴

Adult Education Activities

Seeking effective ways of meeting the reading needs of individuals challenged the Commission from the time of the opening of the Commission's library, and the report of 1930-1931 stated:

How to connect people scattered throughout the 64 parishes of the State with the books which they need from the Commission's library is only one of the problems connected with the services of the Louisiana Library Commission office. While the State University had 3,197 students enrolled for study on the campus, according to the last catalog, the Louisiana Library Commission supplied books to over 24,000 students and readers of all ages and degrees of education, either directly or through the five parish libraries.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Culver, loc. cit.

A few hundred read purely for recreation, but the large majority read for information and inspiration.¹⁵

In satisfying the informational needs of readers, the Commission provided material during 1931-1932 in response to 13,289 special requests, which meant that the borrower requested subject materials, and the library made an extended search for the information through various reference sources: bibliographies, books, periodicals, clipping files, indexes, catalogs, etc.¹⁶

During 1930-1931, twenty-three readers clubs were organized in the state voluntarily and the clubs borrowed books from the Commission for all members at one time, thus avoiding the necessity for each individual to write to the library and pay postage each time a book was read.¹⁷

This plan was devised for groups with similar reading tastes so that the books could be exchanged among the members. When Mansfield organized with 350 members of all ages and reading tastes, it was soon discovered that so large a group could not be adequately served in this way, and the number was consequently limited to 25 persons. These groups have all organized themselves voluntarily, as the Commission sends no one out to stimulate an interest or help in the organization, feeling that all such effort should go toward the establishment of parish libraries.¹⁸

¹⁵Fourth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1930-1931 (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1932), p. (5).

¹⁶Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

As a means of stimulating general interest in reading, the Library Commission initiated in 1932 a plan to offer a reading certificate to any individual who read a selected list of twelve good books during the year. The first certificates were awarded at the Farmer's Short Course at Louisiana State University to 33 members of the group.¹⁹

Interest in attaining a reading certificate spread in the subsequent years through the state. A record of the certificates awarded each year from the initiation of the Reading Certificate project through 1937 follows:²⁰

Year	Number of certificates
1932	33
1933	306
1934	336
1935	325
1936	274
1937	273

III. SERVICES OF THE HEADQUARTERS LIBRARY OF

THE COMMISSION

The services of the headquarters library of the Commission steadily increased during the period 1930-1937. The

¹⁹Fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1932-1933 (New Orleans: T. J. Moran's Sons, 1934), p. 12.

²⁰Debora R. Abramson, "Reading Certificates Issued by the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, 1932-1955" (in Records of the Readers' Services Department in the Louisiana State Library).

biennial report for 1936-1937 showed the sum of the two years circulation as 305,522, a notable increase over the 208,964 volumes circulated during the previous biennium.²¹

Reports of the information services of the Commission indicated that the variety of information wanted by borrowers was related to the variety of business and cultural interests of the citizens of the State.²² The Commission provided information in response to requests for material on:

House plans, corrective physical exercises, illiteracy, adult education, marionette construction, cost accounting, store window decorating, ways to make money at home, curriculum study, gardening, soil chemistry, how to build septic tanks, needlework, child care and training, group discussion methods, amateur photography, Christmas and other plays, raising chickens, recreational methods, and countless other . . . subjects.²³

The legislative reference service of the Commission increased constantly, with the collection of law books, documents, reports, and other items offering information on the subjects under debate being in continuous use during the sessions of the Legislature. Plans to expand the legislative

²¹Seventh Biennial Report, Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1938), p. 11.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

reference service were anticipated as more space was provided in the New Capitol.²⁴

IV. MOVE TO THE NEW CAPITOL BUILDING

Quarters for the Library Commission were provided in the new Capitol building which was completed in 1932. In May of 1932, the Commission library and office were moved from one comparatively small room in the Old Capitol to the eighteenth floor of the new Capitol with a large room in the basement in addition for storage purposes and with new furniture throughout.²⁵

The location of the Library Commission in the new Capitol was advantageous in acquainting the citizens of Louisiana who visited the building with the library. This introduction to the services of the Commission contributed to the greatly increased demands made upon the library from all over the State.²⁶

²⁴Fourth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1930-1931 (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Company, 1932), p. 7.

²⁵Fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1932-1933 (New Orleans: T. J. Moran's Sons, 1934), p. 11.

²⁶Ibid.

V. PARISH LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

During the period of 1930-1937, the program of library development of the Commission was expanded through the demonstration of library service in Vermilion parish in 1931, the Sabine Parish Library Demonstration in 1933, and the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration in 1937, which provided library service to Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes.²⁷ The Tri-Parish Demonstration also offered an opportunity to make a comparative study of the effectiveness of library service offered by the public library and service to the general public provided through the public school system.²⁸

General improvement in services and increases in circulation of materials were shown in reports of activities in Concordia Parish Library, Richland Parish Library, Sabine Parish Library, Webster Parish Library, and in the Shreve Memorial Library where the facilities of the library had been extended to the residents of Caddo Parish.²⁹

An increasing awareness of the value of professional library service was indicated by the action of the New

²⁷Dixon, op, cit., pp. 41-42. ²⁸Ibid., p. 42.

²⁹Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 12-13.

Orleans Public Library Board in engaging the first professionally trained librarian to head the institution, thus initiating an era of growth and progress in library service to Orleans Parish.³⁰

From April 1, 1935, to December 1, 1935, the Commission provided assistance to the Richland Parish Library in reorganizing its services to meet the needs of the entire population.³¹ Since Richland was the first parish to establish a parish library under the library law of 1926; and, since at the time there were no adequately trained and experienced librarians to develop the organization of the library, it was decided to use the small balance in the Carnegie Fund for strengthening and reorganizing the Richland Parish Library. The local authorities in Richland Parish were encouraged to make the necessary financial arrangements to keep the service up to the standard attained.³²

The Vermilion Parish Library Demonstration

The Vermilion Parish Library Demonstration, which was

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Sixth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1934-1935 (n.p., n.n., 1936), p. 9.

³²Ibid.

opened in February, 1931, came as the result of the patient and sustained interest and efforts of a number of the club women and library-minded citizens in the parish and the professional guidance, initiative, and support of the Library Commission.³³ Interest in a library demonstration stemmed from November, 1925, when in response to a request, the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission explained to the president of the Little Library Association in Vermilion the nature of a parish library system. The Executive Secretary recommended that the club officer help stimulate local awareness of the value of having a library to serve all the people of the parish.³⁴

Interest in a parish library developed as press releases on the Library Commission and its service attracted the attention of club women, schools, and individuals in the parish.³⁵ The Executive Secretary of the Commission was invited to speak to various clubs. The people of the parish took advantage of the loan service of the Commission by borrowing books in large numbers.³⁶ Clubs requested

³³Mary W. Harris, "The Louisiana Library Demonstration Plan" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library Extension Department, 1952), p. 67. (Typewritten.)

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

assistance in program planning, and borrowed books from the Commission to prepare for the programs. School teachers requested material to supplement the resources of the school libraries in the parish.³⁷

The general interest in securing a parish library resulted in a meeting of the Police Jury, at which a request for funds for the project was presented.³⁸ Among the persons in attendance was a grandmother, Lenora Vaughan, who came from remote Pecan Island, traveling by boat and on foot, and made a stirring talk, describing what such an opportunity to get good books would have meant to her during her fifty years of residence there, and telling the Police Jury that she was making an appeal on behalf of the (400) residents of the Island.³⁹

The sum of \$1,500.00 was pledged by the Police Jury, the School Board, and the Councils of four towns in the Parish. The Commission offered to provide the book collection and supervise the library for a one-year demonstration.⁴⁰

A field representative from the Commission was sent

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., p. 68.

³⁹Louisiana Library Commission, Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930 (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), p. 65.

⁴⁰Ibid.

to Vermilion Parish to survey conditions, to help select suitable locations for the branches and stations, and to secure information concerning local needs and interests as a basis for selecting books and other materials for the demonstration.⁴¹

Distribution points were provided by the local communities in Abbeville, Cow Island, Delcambre, Erath, Gueydan, Henry, Indian Bayou, Kaplan, Maurice, Meaux, Pecan Island, and Perry; and the branches were housed in such centers as a school building, store, rented room, post office, or city hall.⁴²

While preparations were being made in Vermilion Parish, the staff at the Commission headquarters was working intensively to complete the assembling and the preparation of the book collection and the necessary records for the demonstration.⁴³

Newspaper publicity was handled by the staff of the Commission, and press releases were prepared for newspapers in the Vermilion area, including Crowley, New Iberia, and Lafayette.⁴⁴

The demonstration was directed and supervised by

⁴¹Harris, loc. cit.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

Bess Vaughan, a field representative from the Commission, for the first four months. Then Mathilde Edwards, a local citizen, who was a college graduate, was appointed to head the parish library.⁴⁵

The use made of the library was reflected in the report of the circulation of 76,000 volumes to 3,000 registered borrowers during the demonstration, with the comment that some of the books were read by four or five members of a family before they were returned to the library.⁴⁶ The nature of the requests for informational material indicated a seriousness of purpose among readers, who were supplied information on such topics as:

. . . radio advertising, importance of great rivers of the world, Louisiana History, pottery, china, old quilts, retail merchandising, elementary studies for a teacher, violin makers, Spanish-American War, astronomy, abnormal psychology, radio telegraphy, chicken and turkey raising, incorporation laws, stocks and bonds, literature for children, and reading objectives for teachers.⁴⁷

Leaders of the library movement realized from the beginning of the demonstration that after the one-year period of demonstration, local support would have to be provided if the library continued; and plans were made to secure local funds to support the library. Since, however, the entire

⁴⁵Ibid. ⁴⁶Ibid. ⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 68-69.

country was experiencing an economic depression during the period, the library board "reluctantly came to the conclusion that a library tax could not be voted at that time."⁴⁸

The Board of Control of the Vermilion Parish Library sought further assistance from the Library Commission, in an effort to carry the demonstration for a second year; and the Library Commission agreed to continue the project the second year if the Vermilion Parish Library would employ a professionally trained librarian.⁴⁹

As the one-year demonstration period of the library came to a close in February, 1932, the banks of the parish were closed, the people were suffering an economic depression, and it "seemed impossible to arrange for continued financing."⁵⁰ After due consideration, the Board of Control of the Vermilion Parish Library decided to discontinue the project, despite the local interest in having a parish library. The efforts of the library-minded citizens of Vermilion Parish were renewed and rewarded by a successful library demonstration ten years later.⁵¹

An editorial in the Abbeville (Louisiana) Meridional

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 69.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 70.

stated on January 9, 1932:

Nearly a year has elapsed since the establishment of the Vermilion Parish Public Library by the Louisiana Library Commission. Since its opening thousands of books have been circulated from the shelves of the central library and the various branches. The good that has been accomplished cannot be measured in dollars and cents.

A large number of our citizens have given the Library their sincere approval and did all within their power to make it a success. Others whose integrity and public-spiritedness cannot be questioned, but who were not well informed as to the purpose for which public libraries are established, and the nature of the work and results obtained, have manifested a spirit of indifference--occasionally downright disapproval.

Differences of opinion are to be expected and a large variety of estimates of life values are inevitable among people today. . . . However, there is little of force that can be urged against the establishment of public libraries. . . .

There is much to be said in favor of the establishment and operation of libraries--the arguments against them are negligible. The world's wisest have spoken in favor of books and reading--even the coarsest and most depraved have admitted the value of reading and study.⁵²

Sabine Parish Library Demonstration

The Library Commission opened the fifth parish library demonstration on January 12, 1933, in Sabine Parish, and in reviewing the background of the library stated:

Some of the most progressive citizens of Sabine Parish asked the Commission to send a representative

⁵²Editorial in the Abbeville (Louisiana) Meridional, January 9, 1932.

to discuss with them the ways and means of establishing a parish library. It was felt if a demonstration was put on so that the citizens could see how a parish library operated for the benefit of all the citizens, it would then be possible to bring about the permanent establishment.⁵³

Since the Louisiana Library Commission had no funds to support the demonstration, an appeal was made to the Carnegie Corporation, whose interest in library development in Louisiana had supported the demonstration method of library establishment through grants to the Commission. The Carnegie Corporation acted favorably and provided \$4,922.91 for the library development in Sabine Parish. The funds made possible the purchase of the necessary collection of books and library materials and the employment of Kathryn Williams, a professionally trained librarian, for the period of the demonstration. The Police Jury appropriated \$1,500 to meet local expenses involved in travel within the parish to distribute the books and supervise the branches.⁵⁴

In reporting the library demonstration in Sabine Parish, the Times Picayune stated:

Sabine Parish is bringing books to the byways. For

⁵³Fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1932-1933 (New Orleans: T. J. Moran's Sons, 1934), p. 6.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Sabine parish on the western edge of Louisiana has gone 'library-minded,' and the people of the parish have read 8,291 books since January when the Sabine Parish library was opened. . . .

The parish library includes the main center in Many, parish seat and largest town, and six branches located at Mt. Carmel, Peason, Florien, Negreet, Belmont and Noble. It is planned to have 15 branches when the projected library system of the parish is under way.

There are 20,000 white persons in Sabine parish. . . . The town of Many has 1,500 population. Sabine parish consists of farms and small communities. It is a picturesque parish, where one may still see log cabins with wide enclosed hallways, wagons drawn by oxen, patchwork quilts hung to air in the sun. It is a historic parish, for it has the site of Fort Jessup, American frontier post founded in 1822 by Zachary Taylor; and here too, a large Mexican population suggests the days when the interests of the parish were bound up with those of Texas and other Mexican territory. . . .

The main library is located in the front part of the Sabine Gas Company building on the main street of Many. On the opening afternoon more than 300 books were taken out.

Then came the opening of branches in the smaller communities. . . . The books in the branch libraries are continually changed, in order to give the farm people full benefit of all the books in the parish library. They are moved in a truck, locally known as 'the book buggy.'

Special requests for books on particular topics are granted by sending to the main library for the needed books.

The library has obtained material on gardening and poultry for a farmer who said his little girl told him he 'ought to get a book to learn to farm better'; on landscaping and rose growing for several home owners in Many; on commercial art and landscaping technique for local artists; on built-in kitchen features for a home builder; on bird house construction for a carpenter who

wished to make a little extra money during hard times; on stationary boilers for an oil field worker; on cemetery beautification for a civic group.

Expensive and out-of-print books on oil, including geological survey bulletins have been supplied to several men interested in oil fields.⁵⁵

During the one-year demonstration period 84,583 books were circulated from a collection of 7,146, and the demonstration was considered a success.⁵⁶

The citizens expressed their appreciation, and at the close of the demonstration the Police Jury assured the citizens that the library would be continued, and the School Board provided a fund of \$7,800.00 for its maintenance.⁵⁷

The Library Commission arranged to continue their supervision of the program and to leave 4,000 books in the parish until the resources of the local collection could be enlarged.⁵⁸

The Tri-Parish Library Demonstration; A Center for Research on Adult Library Service

The interest of Governor Richard Leche in providing

⁵⁵News item in the Times Picayune (New Orleans, Louisiana), March 24, 1933.

⁵⁶Fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1932-1933 (New Orleans: T. J. Moran's Sons, 1934), loc. cit.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

library service for the citizens without libraries, and his particular concern for the eighty per cent of the rural adult population with no library facilities resulted in the establishment of the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration in Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes in 1937, and in a comparative study of the effectiveness of library service to adults through the school system and the public library.⁵⁹

Governor Leche appealed to the Superintendent of Education, T. H. Harris, who suggested that the Department of Education and the Library Commission spend \$10,000.00 on books for adults. The service to adults to be offered by the Department of Education through fifty-six schools in ten parishes as a basis for comparison with the service to adults in two parishes to be directed by the Library Commission.⁶⁰

The Library Commission did not have sufficient funds for the study. The State Board of Education, therefore, offered to provide \$10,000.00 for the purchase of books.⁶¹

Winn and Grant parishes were selected by the Library Commission for the demonstration of public library service, since both parishes were working for a parish-wide library

⁵⁹Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 8-9.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 8.

service and public sentiment was favorable. Citizens had formed organizations supporting the establishment of parish libraries in both Winn and Grant parishes. The organization in Grant Parish had sent 29 petitions to the Governor and the Library Commission requesting help in starting a parish library.⁶²

Jackson Parish petitioned to be included in the regional library demonstration after Winn and Grant parishes were selected. The Library Commission voted to add \$5,000.00 to the \$10,000.00 provided by the State Board of Education and to demonstrate public library service on a Tri-Parish basis.⁶³

The demonstration of library service to adults through the high schools was directed by Lois F. Shortess, State Supervisor of School Libraries, using schools located in Allen, Caldwell, Cameron, Catahoula, Evangeline, La Salle, Livingston, St. Helena, Vermilion and West Carroll parishes.⁶⁴

The service to adults through the schools was studied in comparison with the service of the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration.⁶⁵ For the six months period of the demonstration, the Tri-Parish Library serving a white adult population of 31,610 circulated 101,236 books, while the school libraries

⁶²Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁶³Ibid., p. 9.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 15.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 15-17.

serving 119,296 white adults, circulated 14,355.⁶⁶

The following summary report on the experiment showed that the parish libraries were more effective than the school libraries in reaching general readers and in the circulation and utilization of library resources:⁶⁷

	Tri-Parish Library	School Libraries
Total white population in area	31,610	119,296
Total registered borrowers	9,031	5,117
Total circulation	101,236	14,355
Distributing centers	19	56
Bookmobile routes	2	0
Per cent of population registered	28.5	4.3
Average circulation per borrower	11.2	2.7

VI. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cooperating with the Library School of Louisiana State University, the Library Commission supervised the practice work of three students each year during the second semester of the school year, in order that the students might have practice in actually doing library work in all departments of the library.⁶⁸

The Executive Secretary of the Library Commission

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 17.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Fifth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1932-1933 (New Orleans: T. J. Moran's Sons, 1934), p. 11.

delivered lectures to the Library Science classes of Louisiana State University on Louisiana library development and the services of the Library Commission, and the Chairman of the Commission gave a series of lectures on Louisiana Library Law.⁶⁹

Columbia University invited the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission to give a course in Regional Libraries during the summer session of 1935, and a leave of absence was granted the Secretary for this professional service.⁷⁰

In order to keep the Louisiana Library Commission in direct contact with the variety, extent, and types of services which were being practiced and developed by national leaders in state library work, the Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, Debora R. Abramson, was sent during June and July, 1937, to visit the New Jersey Library Commission, the Wisconsin Free Public Library Commission, the Oregon State Library, and the California State Library.⁷¹

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Sixth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1934-1935 (n.n., n.p., 1936), p. 11.

⁷¹Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 20.

Observations and special study were given to problems of administration of state aid for libraries where given; adult education and the part that can be played by the state library agency; problems--involved in handling books for the blind--in cost, personnel, space; legislative reference service and special services to state departments; Union Catalogs; special collections of local materials--sources, cost, methods of handling, potential value; salary schedules and problems dealing with desirable number, specialists, etc., on the staff.⁷²

VII. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The public relations program of the Library Commission was strengthened during the period by the activities of the members of the Commission and the Executive Secretary, the promotion of a traveling exhibit of children's books, and the organization of the Citizens' Library Movement. An awareness of the meaning of the services of the Commission to individuals was revealed in numerous unsolicited letters.

Activities of the Commission and the Executive Secretary

The Executive Secretary and the members of the Library Commission furthered the program of public library development through active participation in the work of numerous organizations throughout the State, and by carrying on an intensive program of talks to groups interested in

⁷²Ibid., pp. 20-21.

parish library development.⁷³

Emphasis on library development was made in Folk Schools which were held throughout the State, and the Executive Secretary and the members of the Commission focused attention on books and reading through the library extension projects of the Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association, the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs, the home demonstration clubs, and various local study clubs.⁷⁴

Traveling Exhibit of Children's Books

As a means of helping children, teachers, parents and librarians to keep in touch with the current books for children, the Louisiana Library Commission cooperated with a committee of the Section of Work with Children of the American Library Association to secure, from various publishers throughout the country, a traveling exhibit of children's books.⁷⁵

The Louisiana Library Commission was one of a number of states [sic] which wished to take advantage of the plan, by which the cooperating publishers would mail free of charge to the state agency a representative group of their spring or fall titles, and these titles could be

⁷³Sixth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1934-1935 (n.p., n.n., 1936), pp. 10-12.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 23.

sent as a group for exhibit purposes to schools, libraries and clubs throughout the state. In this way the teachers, parents and children and librarians could see what new titles were being brought out and could examine them, have in mind the ones most attractive, and keep informed as to the publishers' new stocks, even though they lived far from book-stores and large libraries.⁷⁶

The exhibit was received by the Library Commission in the spring of 1937, and sent to the State Parent-Teacher Association meeting and to the State Library Association, and then circulated to schools and libraries in fifteen centers throughout the State.⁷⁷

The groups which received the exhibit felt that the contribution of the publishers to the project, and the individuals and agencies making the exhibit available to the local schools and libraries, had rendered a valuable service in helping create a demand for good books and in showing what was being done in the field of book production for children.⁷⁸

Citizens' Library Movement

Citizen interest in library development in Louisiana was one of the significant factors noted by the President of the League of Library Commissions when Louisiana was being considered for the Carnegie grant for a state-wide library

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 23-24.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 24.

demonstration.⁷⁹ That interest was evident when the first citizens group meeting was called by James Monroe Smith.

On April 25, 1936, in response to an invitation from Dr. James Monroe Smith, President of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, a meeting was held in Allen Hall of the University that was a forerunner of the Citizens' Library Movement. To this meeting were invited presidents of state organizations, library boards, and citizens interested in discussing the problems of more and better libraries for Louisiana.

At this meeting two things were accomplished: Resolutions were passed to establish a Citizens' Library Movement and to ask the Legislature for state aid to existing libraries and for aid to establish parish and regional libraries under the law. And, an Organization Committee was appointed to report back at a later meeting.⁸⁰

The Citizens' Library Movement was organized in Shreveport in April of 1937, to support the program of the Library Commission and to seek increased financial support from the Louisiana Legislature for establishing parish and regional libraries and to provide state aid to existing libraries.⁸¹

The officers named at the organizational meeting of

⁷⁹Milton J. Ferguson, "Why Louisiana?" Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration: 1925-1930, by the Louisiana Library Commission (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), pp. 8-9.

⁸⁰Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1936-1937 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 24-25.

⁸¹Ibid.

the Citizens' Library Movement were:

Governor Richard W. Leche, Honorary Chairman; Hon. T. H. Harris, [and] Pres. James M. Smith, Honorary Vice-Chairmen; J. O. Modisette, Jennings, Chairman; Mrs. Allen Hackett, New Orleans, Secretary; Mr. Ward Delaney, Shreveport, Treasurer; Mrs. Margaret Dixon, Baton Rouge, Executive Secretary.⁸²

During the first year of the existence of the Citizens' Library Movement, over 200,000 individuals interested in library development pledged their support to the Movement.⁸³ And the program had been endorsed by the following statewide organizations:

Louisiana Press Association, Louisiana Association of Young Men's Business Clubs, Louisiana Federation of Labor, Louisiana State Fair Association, Louisiana Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Louisiana Library Association, Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs, Louisiana Parent-Teacher Association, Louisiana Reserve Officers Association, American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary, Louisiana Division, American Association of University Women.⁸⁴

In local communities, civic, community, cultural, service and study clubs became sustaining members of the Movement.⁸⁵

Unsolicited Individual Expressions of Appreciation

Numerous unsolicited expressions of the value of the library service to individuals in the State were received by

⁸²Ibid., p. 25.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

the Library Commission. Excerpts from a few of the many letters received from citizens in communities widely scattered over the State indicated their appreciation:⁸⁶

Cheneyville: 'My entire family have enjoyed to the fullest extent the books you have sent; it means so much to people to have access to a good library.'

Donaldsonville: 'The Louisiana Library Commission is a boon to the people of a small community where no local library is available. All the books you sent were fine and very useful.'

Good Pine: 'I do not have the means to go to college, but thanks to you . . . that cannot keep me from bettering my education.'

Atlanta: 'My home-tanning is becoming successful thru the use of your books.'

White Castle: 'I live in the country and have very little opportunity for social diversions. The books you selected are just the type of literature I enjoy. A number of them I read aloud to my family, thus affording evenings of pleasure that will never be forgotten by us.'

Covington: 'I have always enjoyed and appreciated the books you enable me to read, but now my appreciation is even deeper, for just now the doctor has given me a vacation. He says rest a few weeks, so your books are truly life savers.'

Camp Beauregard: 'These books proved very beneficial in the course in plumbing offered in this camp. As a result of completing this course one enrollee was given a job as a civilian plumber at this post. Part of his success is attributed to the generosity of the Louisiana Library Commission.'

⁸⁶Sixth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1934-1935 (n.p., n.n., 1936), pp. 5-6.

CHAPTER IV

LOUISIANA LIBRARIES IMPROVED (1938-1941)

The Citizens' Library Movement brought greater awareness of the importance of libraries in Louisiana during the years 1938-1941; and favorable action of the governing officials brought increased financial support for the library development program of the Library Commission. Nine demonstration libraries were conducted during the period. Louisiana libraries made effective use of assistance provided by the Work Projects Administration of the Federal government.

The election of Essae Martha Culver, Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, to the presidency of the American Library Association gave national recognition to her leadership in library development and greater emphasis to the Louisiana demonstration library program.

The account to follow elaborates the 1938-1941 period of progress in Louisiana libraries.

I. LIBRARY COMMISSION RECEIVED GREATER FINANCIAL SUPPORT

With the hope of expanding the parish library program and providing state aid to existing libraries, the Library Commission presented a budget request for \$700,000.00 to the Legislature in 1938.¹ The Commission received letters and telegrams from members of the Citizens' Library Movement in "almost every parish in the state . . . pledging support and cooperation to the Commission's request of \$700,000.00 for the biennium."²

Governor Richard W. Leche received a deluge "of letters and telegrams . . . asking that he give favorable consideration to the library budget and assuring him that the people of Louisiana want libraries."³

The request for the \$700,000.00 appropriation for the library program was not met by the Legislature, but the appropriation for the Library Commission was increased by the Legislature of 1938 over that of the previous biennium by \$100,000.00 with the understanding that the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration in Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes would

¹Margaret Dixon, "The Citizens' Library Movement," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 1:5, March, 1938.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

continue to be supported by the State until local tax elections could be held to secure funds for its maintenance.⁴

The State fund for the Commission was \$167,500.00 in 1938-1939.⁵ "The appropriation made by the Legislature for the Commission was \$200,760.00 for the biennium, 1940-1941."⁶

The increased appropriation made possible the expansion of the extension program of the Commission and the strengthening of the reference services of the library. The Commission anticipated aiding as rapidly as possible the forty-nine parishes in Louisiana which had little or no library service so that Louisiana would have "a system through which books could be within easy reach of all the people."⁷ The Library Commission stated that Louisiana's aim was to lead all other states in the diffusion of knowledge for the cultural and educational advancement of her people, "believing that the highest civilization and greatest progress will

⁴Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 15.

⁵Ibid., p. 38.

⁶Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 24.

⁷Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 9.

result."⁸ The expansion of parish library service by the demonstration method was accelerated as the funds of the Library Commission were increased.⁹

II. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

During the years 1938 through 1941, the Library Commission experienced changes in personnel due to death and governmental processes.¹⁰ Hugh M. Blain, who became a member of the Commission in 1926, died on December 30, 1938.¹¹

Mrs. W. M. Knott was appointed to membership on the Library Commission by Governor Earl Long in November 1939, but her appointment was not presented to the Senate for approval, as prescribed by law. . . . Mrs. Knott did not, therefore, become a member.¹²

J. O. Modisette, Chairman of the Commission; Katherine Hill, Treasurer; and Margaret M. Reed carried on the work of the Commission until 1940, when, acting upon the recommendations of the Griffenhagen Associates for the

⁸Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁹Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁰Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:45, Spring, 1953.

¹¹Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. (3).

¹²Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. (5).

reorganization of the state government, the Legislature passed Act 47 of 1940 placing the Library Commission under the jurisdiction of Louisiana State University.¹³

Prior to the legislative session of 1940, the Griffenhagen Associates were employed by the State to reorganize the state government and reduce the number of boards and commissions so that many comparatively small agencies were placed under other boards. The Louisiana Library Commission in the new law was finally to be transferred to the Louisiana State University as a Library Extension Division. The law allowed two years to accomplish the transfer, but before the Library Commission was transferred the law was declared unconstitutional.¹⁴

After the action taken by the Legislature of 1940, J. O. Modisette was asked by Governor Sam H. Jones to act as a one-man Commission pending the anticipated reorganization of the state government.¹⁵

The commentary on the members of the Commission in the Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941, which covered the events of the first six months of 1942, (because of a contemplated change in the practice of handling the reports to comply with the govern-

¹³Ibid., pp. (4-5); and news item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), December 29, 1940.

¹⁴Statement dictated by Essae M. Culver for inclusion in this study. Baton Rouge, October 15, 1956.

¹⁵Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), pp. (4-5).

mental reorganizational pattern) included the following statements:

At the beginning of the new state administration in 1940, Miss Katherine Hill sent her resignation from membership on the Commission to Governor Jones. This terminated a long and very valuable period of service, for Miss Hill was appointed in 1920 to the first Louisiana Library Commission and served as its secretary for five years, until funds were made available by the Carnegie Corporation to employ an executive secretary. Miss Hill was then elected treasurer of the Commission and continued as treasurer until her resignation. Few state boards or commissions have members who have served continuously for twenty years, and the Louisiana Library Commission has profited greatly from the continuity of interest and policy made possible thereby. It is with deep regret that we lost the valuable advice and help of Miss Hill from our counseling body.

Mrs. Reed was also appointed to membership on the Louisiana Library Commission in 1920 and served until 1942, when she presented her resignation to Governor Jones. After the resignation of Miss Hill in 1940 and pending the anticipated reorganization of the Commission, Mr. Modisette served as a one-man commission upon request of Governor Jones, and after Mr. Modisette's death Mrs. Reed was called upon to again serve until a new Commission could be appointed.

Such generosity of time, thought and effort in serving a public cause for over twenty years cannot be evaluated, but it is sincerely appreciated by the Commission staff.

All members of the Louisiana Library Commission serve without compensation or hope of reward, except in the satisfaction that comes from seeing the educational advancement in the state as a result of their counsel and direction.¹⁶

¹⁶Ibid.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS SERVICES OF THE COMMISSION

The Louisiana Library Commission Headquarters was described as:

. . . the heart of the library system in Louisiana.
. . . the pulse that indicates the way life flows in the library life of the state . . . a clearing house through which librarians move within the system of demonstrations and established libraries.¹⁷

With the growth of the activities and services of the Library Commission, and with increased financial support, the organization of the Headquarters was enlarged and developed in three areas: the Administrative Department, the Reference and Circulation Department, and the Extension Department, in charge of the parish and regional demonstrations.¹⁸

Administrative Department

The Administrative Department headed by the Executive Secretary, Essae M. Culver, had the duties of:

. . . direction and supervision of the entire staff and the activities of all departments; carrying out all functions as prescribed by law, such as giving advice and help to all communities wishing to establish libraries; planning campaigns of education leading up

¹⁷Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 15.

¹⁸Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 19.

establishment, and directing publicity for all departments.¹⁹

Sallie J. Farrell, a graduate of the University of Illinois Library School with experience in the Louisiana parish library program, was named to the administrative staff of the Commission as a field worker in the summer of 1941, because of the increased demand for field work in parishes interested in securing demonstrations and in conducting promotional campaigns leading to the establishment of libraries by the police juries.²⁰

Reference and Circulation Department

The Reference and Circulation Department of the Commission, directed and supervised by the Assistant Secretary of the Commission, Debora R. Abramson, was enlarged during 1938 through 1941 to meet the informational requests of individuals and libraries throughout the State.²¹

Trained and experienced personnel handled reference questions, prepared books for shipment to borrowers, compiled booklists and special bibliographies, gave legislative reference service, planned programs for various organized groups, issued the Reading Certificates for patrons who

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., p. 24.

²¹Ibid., p. 25.

submitted approved reading lists of twelve titles which they read during the year, and handled the details of shipments and circulation. The following table shows the growth and use of the Commission library and reference services, and the number of reading certificates issued yearly in 1938-1941.²²

Year	Total Book Collection	Total Circulation	Special Reference Requests	Reading Certificates
1938	51,932	374,306	35,856	618
1939	79,796	659,344	40,212	732
1940	95,987	815,275	38,332	486
1941	127,078	568,929	39,692	646

The Commission recognized the importance of maintaining adequate, trained and experienced staff to meet demands, and explained its position on personnel as follows:

The Louisiana Library Commission has been criticized by several investigating committees of the Legislature for not spending more on books and less on personnel, but it is impossible to increase and reduce personnel as the budget goes up or down and continue adequately the services as the volume increases. . . . A cut in book budget does not affect the services as much as a corresponding cut in personnel.²³

²²Ibid., pp. 25-28; Also see Appendix, Table II on Growth and Use of the Book Collection and Reference Services, p. 455.

²³Ibid., p. 25.

Extension Department

The Extension Department was enlarged and the Demonstration Library Program concentrated in it in 1938. Mary W. Harris was named as Director of the parish and regional library services of the Commission.²⁴ Previous to the reorganization of the departments of the Commission, the books for the demonstration libraries had been ordered, assembled, cataloged, and processed through the Reference and Circulation Department of the headquarters library.²⁵

The Director of the Extension Department assumed the responsibility for giving general supervision of all phases of the demonstration program including: book selection based upon a careful survey of the reading interests of the area to be served; purchase of material; preparation of all books, catalogs, and records for the demonstrations; advisory service and assistance on all aspects of the extension service; and direction and supervision of the libraries during the period of the demonstration.²⁶

²⁴Margaret Dixon and Nantelle Gittinger, "The First Twenty-Five Years," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:43, Spring, 1950.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 28.

IV. PARISH AND REGIONAL LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT

During the period of 1938-1941, the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration was continued in Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes; and demonstration libraries were established in Lincoln-Bienville, Natchitoches, Terrebonne, Morehouse, Bossier, Vermilion, Pointe Coupee, and De Soto parishes.²⁷

At the close of the period the Commission reported:

In carrying out the functions of the Louisiana Library Commission program of statewide public library development, about half of the total budget has in the past been spent for parish and regional demonstrations of library service. Largely as a result of these demonstrations there are now seventeen parishwide libraries all on a tax-supported basis and not dependent on donations or charity. Most of these are supported by a special library tax of 1 or 2 mills, as the case may be. Louisiana has pioneered in these state-promoted and financed demonstration libraries and now is outstanding in the number of tax-supported large unit libraries. The parishes have contributed funds for overhead expenses and the WPA has made a significant contribution in clerical help trained by librarians, also provided by WPA, to give the greatest amount of service and the highest quality of which they are capable. In this way Federal, state and local funds and personnel are pooled to bring about the best service and most lasting results.²⁸

Accounts of the demonstration libraries are developed in the sections to follow.

²⁷Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), pp. 29-32.

²⁸Ibid., p. 29.

Tri-Parish Library Demonstration

The Tri-Parish Library provided service to the people of Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes, an area of 2,230 square miles with a population of 44,283 of which 12,637 were Negro, from June, 1937, to April, 1940.²⁹

The demonstration, which was financed by the Louisiana Library Commission with the assistance of the State Department of Education, was scheduled to last only through June of 1938, and its continuance was made possible by an appropriation of the Legislature in May of 1938. The Commission stated that the Tri-Parish Demonstration was:

. . . probably the only such library in the United States for which funds were appropriated by a legislature after a one-year demonstration and in which a State Department of Education participated by contributing \$10,000 toward the initial book collection and operating expenses of the first year.³⁰

The statistical report of the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration for the years 1938-1939 showed the growth and use of the library as follows:³¹

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 39.

	Year	
	1938	1939
Total registered borrowers	13,804	17,186
Total book collection	14,729	18,412
Total book circulation	265,064	339,706
Average circulation per borrower	19.07 $\frac{1}{2}$	19.87
Distribution centers	70	94

The distribution centers of the library were located in schools, stores, community buildings, post offices, police jury buildings, CCC camps. Patrons not accessible to these centers were served by the bookmobile.³²

The demonstration was administered by a professionally trained librarian, Elizabeth Cammack, provided by the Library Commission. Non-professional assistants and custodians were supplied through the Statewide Library Service Project of the Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration of the United States.³³

Library service was provided for individuals and groups by working with various organizations, home

³²Sallie J. Farrell, "Tri-Parish Library, Winn-Jackson Library Annual Report, January - December, 1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), pp. 9-11.

³³Ibid., p. 5.

demonstration agents, farm agents, adult education workers, leaders of the PTA, the men's service clubs. Numerous church groups used the facilities of the library and contributed to the development of the library movement through their sponsorship and use of branch libraries in communities.³⁴

Following the policy of the Commission to work for local maintenance and support of the library at the conclusion of a demonstration, a tax election was duly called by the police juries of Winn, Grant, and Jackson parishes for April 16, 1940, to give the people an opportunity to vote "on the proposition of a two mill tax for five years for the maintenance and support of library service."³⁵

An intensive campaign of publicity and personal contacts with qualified taxpayers followed the announcement of the date of the tax election, and committees were arranged to provide transportation to the polls, when necessary.³⁶

The attitude of the local press toward the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration was shown in the following editorial:

³⁴Ibid., p. 19.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 1-2.

³⁶Ibid., p. 3.

The Enterprise has consistently lent its support to the Tri-Parish Library which serves the parishes of Winn, Jackson, and Grant with library service. We felt that we were fortunate that Winnfield should be selected as the headquarters for this Tri-Parish service. And, we felt too, that it was more than generous of the State to finance the cost of the service over such a long demonstration period.

In an article published in this newspaper last week it was pointed out that Winn parish will gain in dollars and cents by a continuance of the library service by voting the two mill tax on April 16. We feel that it will gain more by furnishing books and information to the people of this section. Books have been and are to the development of the mind what churches have been to the development of the spirit. It is through the medium of books that the learning and advancement of one generation is transmitted to another. These volumes are the channels through which the accumulated wisdom of the ages flow. To deny our people free access to the opportunities afforded by library service is to deny them one of the greatest advantages of life. And, is it fair to close a door to the people, simply because they live in the so-called rural areas, that is open to every city resident in the United States? We feel sure that Winn Parish will not close that door especially when to do so would mean an actual monetary loss to the parish.

We believe that the support which our property owners will give to this proposition will reflect the spirit of a progressive and intelligent citizenry seeking greater opportunities and advantages for its people.³⁷

The types of publicity used in the campaign included:

. . . mimeographed bookmarks placed in all books circulated two weeks before the election; mimeographed broadsides posted in all public places about ten days before the election; mimeographed sheets of information concerning library organization, cost of operation, etc.,

³⁷Editorial in the Winn Parish Enterprise (Winnfield, Louisiana), March 14, 1940.

letters to parents distributed through the schools three days before election; government postals, mailed from Headquarters the day before the election and signed by the parish library boards, reminding each taxpayer to vote 'yes' for library service; . . . a telephone call by a member of the school library club to each taxpayer; and stories in the weekly parish papers, which included resolutions of endorsement from . . . civic . . . agencies . . . taxpayers, and general feature stories.³⁸

The results of the tax election on April 16, 1940 were:³⁹

Parish	FOR		AGAINST	
	Property	Popular	Property	Popular
Grant	\$198,299.00	401	\$270,910.00	328
Jackson	273,571.00	390	385,283.00	422
Winn	388,450.00	515	143,450.00	252

Since the success of a property tax election in Louisiana depends upon winning a majority of both the popular vote and the property valuation voted, the library tax failed to pass in Grant and Jackson parishes.⁴⁰

The libraries in Grant and Jackson parishes were closed April 23, 1940, since the tax was defeated by prop-

³⁸Farrell, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

³⁹Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 2.

erty vote in Grant, and by both property and popular vote in Jackson parish.⁴¹

Upon the request of a citizens committee which called upon the Louisiana Library Commission to pledge support for the library service in Jackson parish until an election could be called in the fall, the library in Jackson was reopened.⁴² The second tax election was called on November 5, 1940, and the second tax election was declared carried by popular and property vote, but it was contested later by certain citizens who demanded a recount. The district judge handling the recount of the election declared that the library tax lost by \$5,000 in property but carried in numbers, and the library was closed.⁴³

In Winn Parish the library tax passed both in popular vote and assessed valuation and became self-supporting on July 1, 1940. The Winn Parish Library has continued to operate effectively and independently, financially, since 1940.⁴⁴

The Library Commission stated:

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 30.

⁴⁴Farrell, op. cit., p. 2.

This was our first and only three-parish unit demonstration, and the first parishes to fail to vote a library tax after a year of demonstration. The fact that this demonstration was financed by the State for three years may have been the reason for the failure. The people felt that the State should or would continue to support the library.⁴⁵

The cost of the Tri-Parish Library demonstration as summarized by the Director of Extension was, in local parish expenditures, \$5,175.00, in expenditures of the Commission \$70,685.91, and in contribution from the State Department of Education, \$10,000.00.⁴⁶

The Lincoln-Bienville Library Demonstration

When the Louisiana Legislature made the appropriation to the Louisiana Library Commission in the spring of 1938 for parish and regional library development, the citizens of Lincoln Parish convinced the Commission that the people of Lincoln Parish wanted a library. The Lincoln Parish Library was established by the Police Jury on December 5, 1938, with the support of the Women's Federated Clubs, the School Board, the Ruston City Council, Chamber of Commerce, American

⁴⁵Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 30.

⁴⁶See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

Legion, Kiwanis Club, and other organizations and individuals.⁴⁷

The Executive Secretary of the Library Commission and the Director of the Extension Department made the initial arrangements for the demonstration library. On January 8, 1939, a professionally trained librarian, Edith W. Rigsby, was sent to Lincoln Parish. Her duties were:

. . . to make a comprehensive survey of the entire parish, both by map and travel, for the purpose of planning and organization of rural library service through the establishment of community branches and a schedule of weekly bookmobile stops in order to reach those people remotely situated and inaccessible to branches.⁴⁸

Ten branches were planned for the Lincoln Parish Library Demonstration, and the formal opening was scheduled for February 1, 1939. The program for the opening was arranged by the Louisiana Library Commission with the first ceremony at the headquarters in Ruston.⁴⁹

State and local officials and librarians from institutions throughout Louisiana were present. The opening was described as follows:

⁴⁷Edith W. Rigsby, "Lincoln-Bienville Library Demonstration, 1939-1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1940), pp. 1-2.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 2.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 3.

A large crowd from the entire parish was present, and open house was held until ten-thirty in the evening. In quick succession and with much community preparation and friendly rivalry, the other nine branches were formally opened at Nobles, Hilly, Vienna, Simsboro, Choudrant, Antioch, Sibley, Hico, and Dubach. In every case school was dismissed in celebration of the occasion, and in Choudrant all business houses closed. The enthusiasm of some of the friends of the library was such that they attended practically every branch opening in the parish.

The branch locations in various places were typical of many county libraries where books and service are always stressed over commodious and elegant buildings and equipment. In two places the books were placed in sections of front shelves of country stores, where in both cases, the owners volunteered to serve as custodians and thus kept the libraries open daily during business hours. Two others were located in the attractive new community houses built by the Home Demonstration Clubs.⁵⁰

The Bienville Parish Unit of the library was opened June 1, 1939, and the plan of organization and operation was similar to the organization of the Tri-Parish Library Demonstration. With the enlargement of the area to be served, a trained and experienced librarian was placed in charge of the Arcadia branch of the library and assisted in the supervision of service in Bienville Parish.⁵¹

From the opening of the library, the branches expressed a need for more books, and there were daily requests for numerous items to be secured from the Reference and Circulation Department of the Library Commission. In the Ruston

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 4.

Branch, extensive use was made of the collection by students of all ages, by the professors of the Louisiana Polytechnic Institute, and by the club women who had worked so diligently to secure the library.⁵²

There were fifty-one distribution centers in the Lincoln-Bienville Library Demonstration, including one central library, nineteen branches, and thirty-one bookmobile stops.⁵³

In eleven months 125,975 volumes were circulated, 6,105 reference questions answered, and 7,405 borrowers were registered. The book collection grew from 5,000 to 8,539.⁵⁴

When the time arrived for calling the library tax election, "there existed an acute and general chaotic political condition due to the approaching State gubernatorial election."⁵⁵ Despite a generally favorable citizen attitude toward the library and increasing use of the library, the Board of Control and the parish officials thought that a library tax would inevitably fail if it were called during the gubernatorial campaign.⁵⁶

The Louisiana Library Commission agreed to extend the period of the demonstration on the same basis of support

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., p. 6.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

for four months until a tax election could be held in May, 1940.⁵⁷

The Library Commission in reporting the Lincoln-Bienville Parish Library Demonstration stated:

The Lincoln library tax election was held May 21, 1940. It carried in numbers by a slight majority but failed in the property vote. The election was held just after the general election . . . we felt that politics mitigated against success. The vote was: Numbers: 340 for; 332 against; Property: \$553,748.83 for; \$642,683 against.

The following August the Bienville Parish Library service was closed without a popular vote by common consent. The financial affairs of the parish were in a serious condition and it was felt that the expense of an election was inadvisable. A large number of people were in favor of a tax but it was felt the chances of reopening later would be greater than if an election were held and it failed to carry.⁵⁸

The failure of the property tax vote in Lincoln Parish, which represented a small group of property holders, caused the Ruston Daily Leader to print an editorial headed, "Our Blackout," deploring the outcome of the election which stated:

Losing the library meant a great deal to us in Ruston and thousands of others throughout the parish, and its loss is a stunning blow. . . . We do not believe the mass of the people in Lincoln Parish will

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), pp. 30-31.

allow the library to leave permanently, and we call upon them to loudly express their shame at the election so further plans can be formulated!⁵⁹

The cost of the Lincoln-Bienville Parish Library Demonstration to the parishes amounted to \$1,473.00 and the Library Commission expended \$28,763.07 on the project.⁶⁰

Natchitoches Parish Library Demonstration

The background of the establishment of a library in Natchitoches Parish was unusual for Louisiana in that the movement was started by the men of the community, instead of the women. The Mayor of Natchitoches, E. L. McClung, suggested at a meeting of the Young Men's Business Club in the fall of 1937 that the Club sponsor a movement to establish a library in Natchitoches; and Eugene P. Watson was instructed to investigate the possibility of securing aid from the Library Commission.⁶¹

Arrangements were made for Library Commissioner J.

⁵⁹Editorial in the Ruston (Louisiana) Daily Leader, May 23, 1940.

⁶⁰See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

⁶¹Bernadine Glaser, "Natchitoches Parish Library Demonstration, June, 1939-December, 1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), p. 2.

O. Modisette and the Executive Secretary, Essae M. Culver, to meet with the Young Men's Business Club and organize a citizens group to support the library movement.⁶²

General interest in the parish library was shown in numerous letters and petitions which were sent to the Louisiana Library Commission requesting that the Commission conduct a demonstration of library service in Natchitoches Parish.⁶³

The Police Jury established the Natchitoches Parish Library by an ordinance on March 8, 1939. The Jury pledged \$500.00 to the support of the library with the understanding that the Parish School Board and the City of Natchitoches would contribute equal amounts. Local funds amounting to \$1,500.00 were to be used to cover local operating expenses of the demonstration with the Library Commission providing the bookmobile, book collection, and salaries. The expenditure of the Library Commission on the demonstration amounted to \$21,127.03.⁶⁴

In surveying the parish as a background for

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview, October 15, 1956.

⁶⁴Glaser, op. cit., p. (1).

establishing the services of the library, Natchitoches Parish was described as follows:

. . . a parish of striking contrasts. Cane River Lake and Red River flow between rich cotton land; a few miles away are red clay hills, not worth cultivation. The Cane River planter lives in his gracious white house; the poorer family in the hills in a log cabin. There is the old town of Natchitoches, bookish and cultured, and the backwoods where newspapers are rare. It is a long, narrow parish covering 809,600 acres. It is forty miles from the headquarters library to the northern branches and thirty-five miles to the southern tip.⁶⁵

The formal opening of the library on June 10, 1939 was well attended. Ten branch libraries were opened as rapidly as possible thereafter. Bookmobile routes were established to reach residents in rural sections of the parish.⁶⁶

In making every effort to provide library service to meet the needs of the people, and in order to ascertain the attitude of library patrons toward local library support, a questionnaire was submitted to the borrowers in the spring of 1940. "A tabulation of the answers indicated that the library was used and appreciated, and very few people went on record as opposing a library tax."⁶⁷

Even though the general attitude toward the library tax was considered favorable, the Natchitoches Parish

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 5.

Library Board of Control requested that the Louisiana Library Commission continue the demonstration until fall when "the time for the tax election was thought to be more propitious."⁶⁸

An energetic campaign preceded the tax election on November 5, 1940. The tabulation of the returns showed that the library tax carried with 682 popular votes, representing \$1,157,940.00 in property assessment in favor of the tax, and there were 366 popular votes, representing \$862,800.00 in property assessment, in opposition to the library tax.⁶⁹

~~The library tax became effective January 1, 1941.~~

The Library Commission continued its support of the demonstration until the end of December, 1940.⁷⁰

The Natchitoches Parish Library Demonstration had lasted a period of nineteen months, during which time the library circulated 163,629 volumes to 7,348 registered borrowers.⁷¹

Terrebonne Parish Library Demonstration

The library demonstration which opened in Terrebonne

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. 6-7.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 8.

⁷¹Ibid.

Parish on November 5, 1939, was one of the first established in southern Louisiana. Located in the bayou region of the State, the parish had a white population of 29,816 at the time of the demonstration. Many of the inhabitants were of French or Spanish origin, and maintained the speech, the interests, and the traditions of their ancestors.⁷²

The library was an outgrowth of the efforts of thirteen women who had conceived the idea of having a public library in the parish thirteen years before it materialized. These women organized a club, which brought the need for a library to the attention of the Police Jury. The library was duly established on January 11, 1939, by action of the Police Jury. A petition for a demonstration of library service was sent to the Library Commission.⁷³

The demonstration was established according to the accepted policies of the Library Commission, with housing furnished by the parish, and the assistance of clerical personnel supplied by the Statewide Library Service Project of the WPA.⁷⁴

The library service was developed with respect to

⁷²Sarah I. Jones, "Terrebonne Parish Library," Library Journal, 66:26, January 1, 1941.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Ibid.

the local interests and needs of the people, both as individuals and as groups. Materials were obtained for the WPA Adult Education Program, the Recreation Community Center, The Study Club, The Literary Club, The Health Unit, and various other agencies and individuals needing information.⁷⁵

The troubled international situation challenged many readers. The library prepared exhibits of timely books, and sponsored a series of forums for adults, who gathered to discuss current issues and world problems.⁷⁶

The bookmobile service proved popular with the people who lived along the bayous. At a number of places, patrons had to cross the bayous in small skiffs or pirogues to meet the bookmobile. At one isolated point where the Terrebonne Parish Library bookmobile stopped regularly, the sound of the horn of the bookmobile brought the patrons from a palmetto-roofed house, and then by boat, to the bookmobile across the bayou.⁷⁷

The tax election for the local maintenance of the Terrebonne Parish Library was called exactly one year after the date of the opening of the library demonstration on November 5, 1940. When the votes were tabulated the results

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

assured the continuation of the library, with 905 popular votes, representing \$1,116,245.00 in assessed property valuation, for and 153 popular votes, representing \$278,638.00 in property assessment, against the library tax.⁷⁸

The statistical records on the demonstration revealed that the Terrebonne Parish Library registered 5,268 borrowers and circulated 91,066 volumes during the period of demonstration at a cost of \$14,386.51 to the Library Commission.⁷⁹

Morehouse Parish Library Demonstration

Citizen interest in securing a public library resulted in the establishment of the Morehouse Parish Library, and arrangements were made for the Library Commission to conduct a one year demonstration of library service. An appreciative audience of several hundred persons attended the Morehouse Demonstration Library opening in Bastrop on February 12, 1940. At the opening ceremonies, which reviewed the efforts of the Kiwanis Club and the Citizens Library Movement in securing the library, intermingled with the expressions of commendation

⁷⁸Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 31.

⁷⁹Patricia Motte, "Terrebonne Parish Library Demonstration, 1939-1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, April 25, 1941), pp. 14-18.

of the project was a note of determination that the parish would never again be without a public library.⁸⁰

People were signing registration cards before getting books, the throngs became so large that it was necessary to close the doors until some of the borrowers had selected their books and left, thus making room for newcomers.⁸¹

Five branches and the bookmobile brought people and books together. The bookmobile was welcomed into rural communities where there were many homes without even the weekly parish paper.⁸²

The enthusiasm for the library was so high in Morehouse Parish that after five months of the demonstration, the Library Commission, the Board of Control, and the Police Jury considered it wise to have the election for the library tax early. The Police Jury called the election on August 6, 1940 for a one-mill tax for a period of ten years to support and maintain the Morehouse Parish Library.⁸³

The campaign for the library tax was carried on for five weeks before the election and the work was carefully planned, leaders selected, and the tax rolls studied. All

⁸⁰Lou Venia Gahagan, "Morehouse Parish Library Demonstration, 1940-1941" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), pp. 2-3.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 3. ⁸²Ibid., p. 4. ⁸³Ibid., p. 5.

the organizations in the community were contacted and asked to endorse the library.⁸⁴

The Kiwanis and Chamber of Commerce assumed an active part in the campaign. At the American Legion meeting, after the resolution of endorsement had passed unanimously, one member rose and asked that they do more than pass a resolution--that each member get out and talk library. He told of how the library had helped him in an extension course on aviation, getting books worth \$48.00, which otherwise would not have been available. . . .

The president of the largest bank in the parish was enthusiastic about the library, so he was asked to use his influence. A story he used in many of his talks was about a farmer who came to the bank in July to make a small payment on a note. This was unusual for a farmer in July. So the banker asked where the farmer got the money to pay the note. The reply was, 'When the library opened in February, I got two books on bees. From them I learned enough about my bees to increase the honey produced. That honey has paid this note.'⁸⁵

On September 17, 1940, the citizens of Morehouse Parish voted on the library tax. A one-mill tax for ten years was passed. The election results showed 418 popular votes for the tax, representing \$1,185,442.00 in assessed property valuation and 77 popular votes against the tax, representing \$367,000.00 in property evaluation.⁸⁶

Morehouse Parish, in voting a library tax at the end of the seventh month of the demonstration, set a record

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁸⁶Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 31.

for Louisiana since prior to that time no one-year library demonstration had passed a library tax so early in the demonstration. The library was carried on as a demonstration by the Library Commission for the entire year; and local support was provided for the library after the Commission withdrew its support at the end of February, 1941.⁸⁷

The statistical records of the demonstration show that the library registered 4,415 borrowers and circulated 83,135 volumes for a local cost amounting to \$1,334.00 and a cost to the Library Commission totaling \$15,731.73.⁸⁸

Bossier Parish Library Demonstration

On September 20, 1940, the Bossier Parish Library Demonstration was opened to the public. The occasion was described as a red-letter day in the history of Bossier Parish, since the realization of the library represented a milestone in community progress which came as a result of the cooperative efforts of the Police Jury, interested citizens and organizations of the parish, including the Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, Book Club, the Bossier Parish Schools, the P.T.A. Council, the governing officials of the local

⁸⁷Gahagan, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

⁸⁸Ibid.

communities, and the Louisiana Library Commission.⁸⁹

Participating in the opening ceremonies were the Chairman and the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission, representatives of the Citizens' Library Movement, the P.T.A. Council, the State Legislature, the Bossier Parish Police Jury, and the Bossier Parish Schools.⁹⁰

Service was provided through branch libraries in Benton, Bossier City, Haughton, Plain Dealing, Elm Grove, and the bookmobile.⁹¹

Attesting to the effectiveness of the library was a farmer who reported that he had used information found in books borrowed from the bookmobile to improve his buildings and production and who commented, "The Parish Library, especially the bookmobile, is a great thing for the farmer."⁹² Another patron, a grammar school boy, asked the librarian not to talk to any more children about using the library, "because so many people know about the library now, you have

⁸⁹Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Narrative Report, October, 1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1940), p. 1-6.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 1.

⁹¹Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Narrative Report, November, 1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, 1940), pp. 1-3.

⁹²Ibid., p. 2.

to stand in line to get a book."⁹³

General readers requested books on current problems, biography, travel, and history. A number of the patrons planned reading programs to secure the reading certificates issued annually by the Library Commission.⁹⁴

Business men showed an interest in the library from the opening of the demonstration. Information was provided on a wide range of business subjects including cafe management, meat cutting, service station operation, collection letters, and electrical wiring.⁹⁵

The library increased its services and reached more readers as the demonstration progressed. The librarian reported adding a new borrower in March, 1941, who stopped the bookmobile at Red Chute late one afternoon and announced to the library assistant:

I didn't aim to have anything to do with this outfit, but since you pass by my house every week, thought I might as well look into it. I want something by Dorothy Thompson or Anne Lindbergh.⁹⁶

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 1.

⁹⁵Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Narrative Report, October, 1940" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1940), p. 4.

⁹⁶Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Narrative Report, March, 1941" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), p. 3.

Army maneuvers in the parish made an impact on the Bossier Parish Library Demonstration in the fall of 1941. The library provided special services for the soldiers, and the library was opened longer hours to accommodate the members of the armed forces who were stationed in the area.⁹⁷

During the one-year period of the demonstration, the Bossier Parish Library registered 4,066 borrowers and circulated 77,310 books. The services of the library were extended to forty organizations in the parish including schools, civic clubs, home demonstration clubs, and church groups.⁹⁸

The parish expended \$1,500.00 on the demonstration while the Commission spent \$15,875.69; and the success of the library demonstration was proved in October, 1941, when the Police Jury appropriated funds to carry on the program of the Bossier Parish Library as a locally supported institution.⁹⁹

⁹⁷Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Narrative Report, September, 1941" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), pp. 1-3.

⁹⁸Elisabeth Williams, "Bossier Parish Library Demonstration, Statistical Report, September 20, 1940-September, 1941" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1941), p. 1.

⁹⁹Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 31.

Vermilion Parish Library Demonstration

In September, 1940, the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission met with the Abbeville Planning Board in Vermilion Parish to consider the second library demonstration for the parish. The people of the parish had not forgotten the joy of having books available during the time of the first library demonstration of 1931. Much discussion occurred among the civic leaders in Vermilion Parish and the representatives of the Library Commission. The Library Commission offered to provide the books and periodicals, trained librarians, and general supervision of the library demonstration, upon the condition that the Vermilion Parish governing bodies appropriate at least \$2,000.00 for the local operating expenses of the second library demonstration. The Police Jury of Vermilion Parish was requested to assume the responsibility for securing the funds necessary to maintain the library service following the second library demonstration conducted by the Library Commission.¹⁰⁰

The Police Jury passed the necessary resolution of library establishment and appointed the Board of Control of

¹⁰⁰Mary W. Harris, "The Louisiana Library Demonstration Plan" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library Extension Department, 1952), p. 70. (Typewritten.)

the Vermilion Parish Library on January 31, 1941. Funds were appropriated for the library by the local governing authorities. The Library Commission provided the books, the bookmobile, and the professional personnel, and assumed the responsibility for the organization, direction, and supervision of the demonstration. Clerical and custodial assistance was provided by the Statewide Library Project of the Work Projects Administration.¹⁰¹

The second library demonstration in Vermilion Parish was much stronger than the earlier demonstration of 1931. The project opened with greater local and state financial support, and with trained librarians, a larger book stock, and a bookmobile, furnished by the Library Commission.¹⁰²

Jessica Boatner, the head librarian of the demonstration, and the field representatives of the Library Commission carried on a public relations program in all sections of the parish to inform people of the services of the library and to gain support for the program.¹⁰³

The formal opening of the library at the headquarters in Abbeville on March 2, 1941, was attended by numerous local residents and visitors from outside the parish, including

¹⁰¹Ibid. ¹⁰²Ibid. ¹⁰³Ibid., p. 71.

civic, educational, and library leaders, and by two guests from South America who were in Louisiana studying the demonstration method of library development of the Louisiana Library Commission.¹⁰⁴

Branch libraries were opened in Kaplan, Gueydan, Delcambre, Erath, Maurice, Indian Bayou, Meaux, Cow Island, and Pecan Island during the first months of the library demonstration, as they were renovated and the assistants were trained for the service.¹⁰⁵

Some opposition to the library arose in Maurice, because the assistants in the branches of the library were assigned by the Work Projects Administration. The townspeople thought that the Federal government, through the Roosevelt administration, selected the books placed in the library.¹⁰⁶ Only after a statement from the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission "that all books were selected by the Library Commission and that the WPA merely trained and paid the workers, did the New Deal opposition abate."¹⁰⁷

The bookmobile grew in popularity as neighbors dis-

¹⁰⁴Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., pp. 72-73.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., pp. 73-74.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 74.

cussed the bookmobile collection which included material for all ages and tastes. The colorful, well-selected books and magazines were appreciated by the country people who read for relaxation after the day's work on the farm was over.¹⁰⁸

Special requests for informational material were varied and numerous, from those of the elderly citizens, who had been educated in Vermilion Parish when the schools were conducted in French, and who asked for books written in French to the youth who exhausted the collection of books on electricity, from the introductory works for young readers to the technical manuals on the subject.¹⁰⁹

World problems and the threat of war permeated the thinking of the people, and the library served in various ways to meet the emergency. The library furnished books for courses in the National Defense Training Program organized by the State Department of Education. Later the library was designated as a War Information Center for the parish and was supplied with all types of pamphlet and bulletin material by the Library Commission.¹¹⁰

The second demonstration of library service in Vermilion Parish had steadily increased its services to the

¹⁰⁸Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 77.

people of the parish, and had scheduled a tax election for the support of the library when "the momentous day of December 7 and the radio announcement of the attack on Pearl Harbor, followed by the declaration of war, stunned everyone."¹¹¹ Members of the Board of Control of the library and interested citizens could not help but wonder and be somewhat uneasy as to the effect on the library election.¹¹² Parish leaders expressed the opinion that a library was even more essential in a time of war. A vigorous publicity campaign was planned to inform the voters.¹¹³

Radio, newspaper, personal and group contacts were made to emphasize the importance of the library. Speakers appeared before clubs and civic organizations. Announcements concerning the library tax election were made in churches. Broadsides were distributed generally.¹¹⁴

When the election returns were officially tabulated after the election on February 14, 1942, they showed that the vote had carried in favor of the library with 563 popular votes, representing \$1,557,578.00 in property assessment, voted for the library tax and 250 popular votes, representing

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 80.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 80-82.

\$791,607.00 in property assessment, voted against the library tax.¹¹⁵

The Library Commission agreed to pay the operating expenses of the Vermilion Parish Library for the sixty days after the promulgation of the election returns during which a protest might be legally filed against the election. The election was not contested.¹¹⁶

The Library Commission turned the agency over to the Board of Control of the Vermilion Parish Library in April, 1942. The Library Commission left the book collection and the bookmobile on indefinite loan to the parish library. The Board of Control was assured that the Library Commission wished to maintain the cordial relations which existed between the two institutions and offered advisory service in all matters affecting the future growth and development of the Vermilion Parish Library.¹¹⁷

Statistical records of the second library demonstration in Vermilion Parish showed that the library registered 7,390 borrowers and circulated 169,713 volumes. The cost to the parish was \$1,750.00 and the Library Commission spent \$17,236.94 on the project.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 82. ¹¹⁶Ibid. ¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Ibid., also see Appendix, Table III on Demonstrations, p. 457.

Pointe Coupee Parish Library Demonstration

The Pointe Coupee Parish Library Demonstration was organized to serve the parish in Louisiana which comes to a point where the Atchafalaya River flows into the Mississippi River, and is called Pointe Coupee, or Cut Off Point.¹¹⁹

The parish, having 576 square miles in area, had a population of 24,004 persons in 1940, with 56.5 per cent, or 13,556, Negro inhabitants. The white population was predominantly of French or Anglo-Saxon origin.¹²⁰

A desire for good educational facilities was evident in the consolidated high schools in the parish, and an interest in books and reading was shown in the efforts of the Book Club of New Roads to finance a library for the town.¹²¹

The members of the Book Club of New Roads recognizing their inability to provide adequate library service for the parish, appealed to the Louisiana Library Commission for a demonstration library.¹²²

The Police Jury of Pointe Coupee Parish passed a resolution establishing a parish library and appropriated \$800.00 for local operating expenses in January, 1941. The

¹¹⁹Elizabeth Cammack, "Pointe Coupee Parish Library, May 1, 1941-May 1, 1942" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1942), p. 2.

¹²⁰Ibid., p. 3. ¹²¹Ibid., p. 3-4. ¹²²Ibid., p. 57.

town of New Roads made an appropriation to contribute to the headquarters building. The Louisiana Library Commission began the necessary preparations for the library demonstration.¹²³

The Library Commission arranged for the library staff, selected and organized the book collection, prepared the catalog records and handled the details of processing the materials in the Extension Department in Baton Rouge, while the staff members in Pointe Coupee Parish made local arrangements and promoted the public relations activities preliminary to the opening of the demonstration.¹²⁴

The formal opening ceremonies of the library on April 27, 1941, revealed the great interest in the project. This interest was maintained throughout the twelve months of the demonstration, during which 3,114 registered borrowers read 63,963 books, or 20.34 books per borrower.¹²⁵

Library service was offered by the main branch of the Pointe Coupee Parish Library Demonstration in New Roads, and in branches in Chenal, Morganza, Livonia, and Innis, with the bookmobile traveling throughout the parish.¹²⁶ The bookmobile took a leading role in the library demonstration, because there were few community centers and the bookmobile could reach the

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 5.

¹²⁶Ibid.

residents who lived on the plantations.¹²⁷ An attempt was made to establish a branch in New Roads for the Negroes, but the branch was not opened during the period of the demonstration.¹²⁸

The impact of World War II was felt in the Pointe Coupee Parish Library Demonstration, and the library was declared an official War Information Center. Material was supplied for classes in civil defense on such subjects as bombs, air raid shelters, poison gas, sabotage, and aircraft spotting.¹²⁹ The bookmobile served classes held in the rural areas on blacksmithing and trades connected with farming.¹³⁰ The library had numerous requests for general material on the war. The library participated in a Folk School, at which a member of the staff of the Louisiana Library Commission spoke on "The Library and National Defense."¹³¹

The Board of Control worked individually and as a body for the advancement of the library, and after seven months of library service, plans were made to put the library on a permanent basis under local support. After

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 15.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 11.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 7.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 15.

¹³¹Ibid., p. 9.

careful consideration, the Board of Control decided to ask the Police Jury for an appropriation rather than to request a tax election for the purpose of securing the funds to maintain the library.¹³²

Each member of the Police Jury was contacted by the library board members. Information was provided on the financial needs of the library before the meeting of the Police Jury on November 3, 1941, when a formal request was made that \$6,500.00 be included in the parish budget to support and maintain the library from May, 1942, until May, 1943.¹³³ The governing body voted unanimously to continue the library service, which had been established by the Louisiana Commission at a cost of \$15,439.83, by an annual appropriation of \$6,500.00.¹³⁴

De Soto Parish Library Demonstration

The Woman's Department Club of De Soto Parish worked for several years, in spite of rebuffs and disappointments, for the establishment of a parish library. In 1940 the Department Club enlisted the support of the Rotary Club of

¹³²Ibid., pp. 12-13.

¹³³Ibid., p. 13.

¹³⁴Ibid. Also see Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

Mansfield in sponsoring the library program.¹³⁵

At an open meeting of the Rotary Club on February 13, 1941, the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission presented information on the procedure for securing a parish library demonstration from the Library Commission. She explained that the parish library had to be established according to the laws of Louisiana. It was unanimously agreed by the citizens attending the meeting that the group would work for the establishment of a parish library in De Soto Parish, and that a request for a demonstration of library service would be submitted to the Library Commission.¹³⁶

The efforts of the citizens interested in the library were successful on May 7, 1941, when the Police Jury passed an ordinance establishing the De Soto Parish Library, and plans for the De Soto Parish Library Demonstration were initiated by the Library Commission.¹³⁷

The preliminary preparations for the demonstration were made by the Extension Department of the Commission, including arrangements for the personnel, the books, the branches, and the bookmobile.

¹³⁵Mary M. Sies, "De Soto Parish Library Demonstration, August, 1941-August, 1942" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1942), p. 1.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 2.

The cherished dream of many individuals came true when on August 7, 1941, the De Soto Parish Library was formally opened to the public. Mr. J. O. Modisette, Chairman of the Louisiana Library Commission, presided over the program which consisted of inspiring talks by D. Pierce Cline of Centenary College and Miss Mary Mims, State Sociologist. Many expressions of enthusiasm and gratitude came from local officials and friends of the library.¹³⁸

Since the United States Army was having maneuvers in the region during the opening period of the De Soto Parish Library Demonstration, there were many requests from the soldiers, and a special effort was made to provide informational and recreational material for the men. Library hours were increased, and writing materials were provided. The numerous reference questions from the men in uniform were unusual and interesting, and the staff was kept busy supplying the answers.¹³⁹

The residents of the parish did not use the library extensively until after the maneuvers ended and the army moved out of the community. Then the registration increased and the circulation figures showed increased use of the library by local borrowers.¹⁴⁰

A bookmobile and nine branches served the residents throughout the parish, and one branch was established to

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 3.

¹³⁹Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 4.

serve the Negroes.¹⁴¹

After the library organization was completed, every effort was made to reach readers and to render the best library service possible. Personal contacts were made in all parts of the parish. In developing the publicity for the library, talks were made to groups, and posters and displays were used in the various branches. Story hours were held in many of the branches and the headquarters, and talks were made to the students of the schools.¹⁴²

The library was named a War Information Center, and materials pertinent to the war effort were collected and organized. In selecting new books, special emphasis was placed on securing items related to the war effort. Books on various industries, welding, sheet metal work, mechanics, nutrition and war-time cooking were purchased for the library, as well as books written by news commentators on the war. The library filled numerous requests for information about the various branches of the armed forces. Information on service regulations and how to qualify for the various branches of the service was used extensively.¹⁴³

In the spring of 1942, the library board started

¹⁴¹Ibid.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁴³Ibid.

planning for the tax election. It was unanimously agreed to ask the Police Jury to call an election in June or July to vote on a one-mill tax for five years for the purpose of maintaining the parish library after the demonstration.¹⁴⁴

The tax election was duly called for June 9, 1942. The Mansfield Chamber of Commerce, having had a successful experience in handling a tax campaign for an airport, voted to take over the campaign for the library tax and manage it in a manner similar to the airport campaign. It was agreed that the campaign would emphasize the service of the library.¹⁴⁵

A short, but intensive, well-organized campaign preceded the tax election. When the votes were tabulated, the tax had carried in both property and popular vote. The results of the election revealed 356 popular votes, representing \$1,005,039.50 in assessed property valuation, voted for the library tax; and there were 250 popular votes, representing \$435,693.00 in property assessment, voted against the library tax.¹⁴⁶

During the period of the demonstration, the De Soto Parish Library registered 3,617 borrowers and circulated

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁴⁵Ibid.

¹⁴⁶Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 32.

56,283 volumes.¹⁴⁷

The local funds expended on the library project amounted to \$811.00, while the Library Commission expended \$14,617.58 on the De Soto Parish Library Demonstration.¹⁴⁸

East Baton Rouge Parish Library

While the library program of East Baton Rouge Parish was not a demonstration of the Library Commission, the Commission contributed to the enlargement and expansion of the services of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, when the library was moved into a new building in 1939. The Louisiana Library Commission and the Work Projects Administration made an indefinite loan of about two thousand volumes to the East Baton Rouge Parish Library.¹⁴⁹ The program was developed by a staff of trained and experienced librarians "who put this institution on the library service map of Louisiana at the start."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷Sies, op. cit., p. 8.

¹⁴⁸See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹⁴⁹Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 21.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

V. STATE BOARD OF LIBRARY EXAMINERS

The State Board of Library Examiners which was created by the Louisiana Legislature, Act 36 of 1926, met during 1938-1941 in accordance with the provisions of the law, to hold examinations and to certify administrative librarians for positions in the parish libraries. The meetings and examinations were held at the office of the Louisiana Library Commission in Baton Rouge.¹⁵¹

The State Board of Library Examiners was notified on February 19, 1941, by the Director of the Department of Occupational Standards of the State of Louisiana that:

. . . under proclamation by the Governor of Louisiana, Executive Order No. 13-A, dated January 31, 1941, the functions of the Board of Library Examiners were immediately transferred to the Department of Occupational Standards, in accordance with the provisions of Act 47 of 1940.¹⁵²

The Director of the Department of Occupational Standards met with the Board of Library Examiners on May 19, 1941, and assured the Board that the Department of Occupational Standards wished to cooperate with the library profession and assist in building the standards of the Board of

¹⁵¹Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 38.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 39.

Library Examiners.¹⁵³

The functions of the Library Board of Examiners were continued under the Department of Occupational Standards. The legal counsel for the Department of Occupational Standards stated that the qualifications of future Board members would be the same as in the past, and that future appointments would be made as in the past, in accordance with Act 36 of 1926, by the Louisiana Library Commission.¹⁵⁴

Members of the Board of Library Examiners appointed by the Library Commission were James A. McMillan, Director of Libraries of Louisiana State University; John Hall Jacobs, Librarian of the New Orleans Public Library; and Debora R. Abramson, Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission. James A. McMillan served as chairman and Debora R. Abramson served as secretary of the Board of Library Examiners.¹⁵⁵

VI. MOVE TO OLD HILL MEMORIAL LIBRARY BUILDING

Following the session of the Legislature in July of 1940, the Louisiana Library Commission was notified by the

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁵⁵Ibid., p. 38.

Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds of the Louisiana State Capitol that the Library Commission was to be moved from their quarters on the eighteenth floor of the New Capitol to the Old Hill Memorial Library Building.¹⁵⁶

The Griffenhagen Associates, who had been employed to reorganize the state government, recommended that the Library Commission be moved to the Old Hill Memorial Library Building. The reason given for this move was that too many people used the elevators in the Capitol to visit the library.¹⁵⁷

In the development of the work of the Commission, the library was established in the New Capitol in order to serve the State Legislature, state officials and employees, since legislative reference service was a recognized responsibility of the Library Commission. The Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Commission appealed to the state officials to allow the Library Commission to remain in the New Capitol, because of the accessibility of materials to the officials, and the convenience of the arrangement of the quarters in the New Capitol. The appeal of the Library Commission did not move the officials to allow the agency to remain in the Capitol. "Consequently the library was notified

¹⁵⁶Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), pp. 17-18.

¹⁵⁷Culver, loc. cit.

one day to be ready to be moved the next day."¹⁵⁸

Since the Old Hill Memorial Library Building had been used by the legal department of the Louisiana Highway Commission, the large rooms in the building had been divided into small offices, and the partitions had to be removed and shelving had to be constructed to accommodate the Library Commission. The library was closed for five weeks during the period of the building renovation.¹⁵⁹

The move from the New Capitol, where the quarters had been planned for the Library Commission, to the Old Hill Memorial Library Building, was a handicap to the program of the Library Commission. The Old Hill Memorial Library had been constructed forty-one years earlier for a comparatively small university, and in 1940 it was inadequate in size, arrangement and accessibility for the administration and operation of a state library agency.¹⁶⁰

The Extension Department of the Commission, which was housed on the basement floor of the building, lacked floor space to provide efficient working conditions. It was

¹⁵⁸Statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author, Baton Rouge, November 16, 1956.

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

¹⁶⁰Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 18.

necessary to prepare for only one demonstration library at a time. There was, therefore, much needless duplication of the same processes.¹⁶¹

Inadequate housing caused the Library Commission to be unable to accept several valuable collections which were offered to the Commission on the condition that adequate fire-proof housing be provided. Several private libraries were not used to full advantage for the same reason.¹⁶²

Lack of space also retarded the development of the film and record collections.¹⁶³

VII. STATEWIDE LIBRARY SERVICE PROJECT OF THE WPA

Library development in Louisiana was aided by the Federal government through the Statewide Library Service Project of the Work Projects Administration from 1939 until July, 1942. The library project in Louisiana was sponsored by the Louisiana Library Commission, and the work of the project was developed according to the plan for library development advocated by the Commission.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹Dixon, op. cit., p. 44.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 14.

The Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Library Commission called upon the State Director of the WPA, James H. Crutcher, when the work of the library project was in its initial stages, with the request that no more workers be assigned to small municipal library units, and that the work of the WPA library project be coordinated with the state plan for developing library service on a parish-wide basis. There were nine small municipal libraries at the time, which had been started with donated books and which were in charge of untrained WPA workers, and "experience had proved that this kind of library had almost invariably resulted in resistance to the establishment of parish libraries."¹⁶⁵

When the Executive Secretary and the Chairman of the Library Commission presented their case to the head of the Work Projects Administration, the WPA Director stated:

. . . that they would certainly not do anything that would interfere with the established program of any state department, but would cooperate with that department wherever possible.

A supervisor of the WPA Library Project, who was a trained librarian, experienced in parish library administration, was then assigned to the Louisiana Library Commission to work in close cooperation with the Library Commission and to integrate the two programs. . . .¹⁶⁶

The Statewide WPA Library Project in Louisiana was

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

¹⁶⁶Ibid.

considered an adjunct to the Extension Department of the Commission. Sarah I. Jones, the supervisor of the program, indicated that the project in Louisiana had momentum due to the fact that both the State and Federal government funds were used to carry on a planned program; and the two agencies pooled their resources to work for more and better libraries for Louisiana.¹⁶⁷

The personnel furnished by the Library Project included trained librarians who were employed as supervisors, and assigned WPA workers who served as clerical assistants, branch library custodians, book repairers, bookmobile drivers, and in some instances carpenters and painters were used in the renovation of library quarters.¹⁶⁸

In commenting on the Library Project, the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission stated, "The WPA officials and workers have made an outstanding contribution to Louisiana library development."¹⁶⁹

One of the outstanding contributions was the training given to WPA workers who served as custodians of branches and distributing points throughout the rural areas, as well as on bookmobiles and headquarters. No

¹⁶⁷Eighth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1938-1939 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1940), p. 30.

¹⁶⁸Ibid.

¹⁶⁹Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 17.

WPA worker was without supervision of a trained librarian provided by the WPA, and this contributed not only to the education of the worker, but to a higher grade of service to the library.¹⁷⁰

At the close of the Work Projects Administration, the book collection which had been purchased by the WPA was turned over to the Louisiana Library Commission to form a part of the total resources of the Commission.¹⁷¹

VIII. WRITERS' PROJECT OF THE WPA

The Louisiana Library Commission assumed joint sponsorship with Louisiana State University of the Federal Writers' Project of the WPA in 1939, when it became necessary to have additional funds contributed to assure the continuation of the Writers' Project in Louisiana. The Governor of Louisiana provided the sum of \$2,000.00 for the Writers' Project; and the Louisiana Library Commission, the Louisiana State University, which had sponsored the Project, and Governor Earl Long agreed that the Louisiana Library Commission should be named as a joint sponsor.¹⁷²

¹⁷⁰Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 15.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 45.

The work of the Writers' Project, under the direction of Lyle Saxon, gained recognition through the publication of the New Orleans City Guide, and The Louisiana Guide, and through bibliographies on Louisiana materials, and the indexing of the DeBow's Review.¹⁷³

From the initial stages of the Writers' Project, various workers devoted part of their time to the collection of Louisiana folklore; and under the sponsorship of the Louisiana Library Commission, a volume of folklore was completed and issued under the title of Gumbo Ya-Ya.¹⁷⁴

IX. EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO THE LIBRARY PROFESSION

The Executive Secretary and various members of the staff of the Commission lectured annually to the students attending the Library School of Louisiana State University. Special instruction on the Louisiana Library Laws and the Louisiana plan for developing public libraries by the demonstration method was given to classes in county and regional library administration and to students engaged in practice

¹⁷³Lyle Saxon, "The Federal Writers' Project in Louisiana," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 2:2-3, September, 1938.

¹⁷⁴Lyle Saxon (comp.), Gumbo Ya-Ya (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, c1945), p. iii.

work at the Library Commission. In addition to the usual lectures on the services of the Commission and demonstration libraries, in the spring of 1941 ten lectures were given to the class in county and regional library administration at Louisiana State University, when the regular class instructor was ill.¹⁷⁵

As the Louisiana plan for library development gained wider recognition, the staff of the Library Commission was called upon to present information about the program to professional organizations and to visitors who came to Louisiana from various sections of the United States and from foreign countries. In reporting the work with a visitor from South America, Hilda Escalante, the Executive Secretary of the Commission commented:

Miss Hildamar Escalante of the National Library in Caracas, Venezuela, who was in the United States studying at Columbia University on a scholarship conferred by the Minister of Education, was given a traveling fellowship by our State Department to visit and study the library set-up of several states; and upon advice of the State Department and of the American Library Association, Louisiana was one of three states chosen for study of its library development. She arrived in January, 1941, and for six weeks studied both in the headquarters library and in the field. She attended the openings of several demonstration libraries and visited many of the established libraries, both city and parish,

¹⁷⁵Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 23.

and college and university. Much time of several members of the staff was given to explaining our methods, records, procedures, and statewide planning, and she was taken on a field trip to North Louisiana. Miss Escalante commented on the fact that the people and social life and customs of Louisiana were more like her own country than of other states visited.¹⁷⁶

X. ESSAE MARTHA CULVER SERVED AS PRESIDENT OF THE
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The professional endeavors of the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission gained national recognition in 1940. In retrospect it was said that Essae Martha Culver came to Louisiana in 1925 to organize and direct a state-wide program of library service, "and she remained to develop a state program which has received national acclaim as a model library plan."¹⁷⁷ Louisiana libraries grew in numbers, in quality, and in significance; and the work of the Executive Secretary was formally recognized throughout the nation when she was elected President of the American Library Association in 1940.¹⁷⁸

When Essae M. Culver, of the Louisiana Library

¹⁷⁶Ibid.

¹⁷⁷Cary J. Richardson, "Pomona College Honors Essae M. Culver," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:131, Fall, 1954.

¹⁷⁸Ibid.

Commission, was installed as President of the American Library Association, the State-Times of Baton Rouge reported:

Essae M. Culver, director of Louisiana's 15-year-old library commission, was last night installed as president of the American Library association at the association's annual convention in Cincinnati. . . .

As executive secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission since it opened in 1925, Miss Culver has directed Louisiana's state-wide library program, which has received national recognition.

When she came to Louisiana 15 years ago there were only five free public libraries operating under the law in the entire state, and none of these gave service to rural people. Now, 13 parishes are receiving parish-wide library service and in each of the other parishes which have no adequate service there is interest in establishing a library. The model system of parish and regional libraries now operating in Louisiana is considered one of the best rural library programs in the country.¹⁷⁹

The success of the library program in Louisiana was attributed to the personality, philosophy, and leadership qualities, as well as the professional background and experience of the Executive Secretary of the Commission in her "role of proponent of libraries as true necessities for well rounded community life."¹⁸⁰

The press commented that Essae M. Culver presented

¹⁷⁹News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), June 1, 1940.

¹⁸⁰Feature story in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), August 4, 1946.

the case for libraries to individual communities in every parish in the state, and stated:

. . . [Essae M. Culver's] conception of libraries as centers of community thought and planning, useful educationally, recreationally and culturally to every single individual in a community, is the very opposite of the outmoded idea that libraries are musty storehouses of dry statistics appealing only to the scholar. Appreciating good books and enjoying people, she believes there are few combinations happier than books and people together.

Her ability to impart this vitalized concept of libraries both to members of the profession and the public is one of the primary reasons for the ever-increasing demand of Louisianians for good libraries.¹⁸¹

The Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission had established an impressive record of leadership and professional service in her contributions to the growth of libraries and librarianship on a local, regional, state, and national basis previous to assuming the presidency of the American Library Association in 1940.¹⁸²

In addition to giving leadership in the development of the Louisiana Library Association, and serving as president of the State organization, Essae M. Culver has held the following regional and national offices: President of

¹⁸¹Ibid.

¹⁸²"Presenting Essae M. Culver," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 8:5, June, 1945.

the League of Library Commission, 1931-32; President of the Southwestern Library Association, 1936-38; Second Vice-President of the American Library Association, 1935-36; First Vice-President of the American Library Association, 1939-40, and President of the American Library Association, 1940-41.¹⁸³

In commenting on the extent of her professional activities, Essae M. Culver stated:

Since Louisiana was chosen to carry on a demonstration for the American Library Association, the Executive Secretary was invited to tell about the experiment at library meetings in the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Oklahoma, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan tri-state meeting in Wisconsin, and the American Library Association in Toronto, Canada.

The Louisiana plan was also presented to the Congressional Committee, in Washington, D. C., when they were first considering Federal aid, and to the library schools at Emory University, University of Illinois Library School Conference, American Library Association Workshop at the University of Wisconsin, and at three Columbia University summer school sessions.

Numerous articles were prepared for the Library Journal, A.L.A. Bulletin, Michigan Library Association Bulletin, and the Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association. Talks were made over the radio in Iowa, Colorado, New Mexico, and Louisiana.

While President of the American Library Association, I was asked to serve on an advisory committee to the U.S.

¹⁸³Ibid.

Office of Education in Washington, D. C.

Invitations were accepted to address the American Country Life Meeting at Purdue University; the American Association of University Women in New Orleans; the County and Regional Library Institute at Louisiana State University; the Southwestern Library Association at Galveston, Texas, and at Albuquerque, New Mexico; the American Library Association Meeting in Denver, and the County Section of the California Library Association at Long Beach, California.¹⁸⁴

An editorial in the Baton Rouge State-Times stated:

Louisiana will share the honor, when Miss Essae M. Culver is inducted into the office of president of the American Library association, at its meeting this week in Cincinnati.

As executive secretary of the Louisiana library commission, Miss Culver is doing an important work from the commission's central offices in the Capitol here, and in her travels into various parishes and communities. Since she first came to us some 15 years ago to carry forward the library project in Louisiana to which she was assigned, the service has vastly increased. From the offices here, thousands of books are sent out to readers in rural sections, or those living far from any library. She has guided the establishment of library units, and has helped create a love of reading, and a library concept. She and members of her staff have opened up a fascinating new world for hundreds of men and women, and have supplied them with the specific information they seek on numerous subjects.

The American Library Association is an old and high-ranking organization, founded back in 1876. Miss Culver, elected vice president at the San Francisco meeting last year, now becomes president by the customary procedure.

¹⁸⁴Statement by Essae M. Culver, dictated for inclusion in this study, November 16, 1956.

The honor is a tribute to Miss Culver, and also signifies recognition of Louisiana's library service. It is doubly appreciated.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵Editorial in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), May 27, 1940.

CHAPTER V

WARTIME CONDITIONS PRESENTED PROBLEMS AND CREATED GREATER DEMAND FOR LIBRARY SERVICE (1942-1945)

The program of the Louisiana Library Commission during 1942-1945, to be elaborated in the succeeding sections of this chapter, was affected by wartime conditions which increased the demand for library services in relation to the needs of the military forces, the industrial expansion, and the heightened interest of the general reader in current events and personal development. At the same time, wartime restrictions and shortages of material and personnel intensified the problems of providing and expanding library services.

The Library Commission suffered the loss of able leadership in the death of J. O. Modisette, who was serving the State as a one-man Library Commission at the time of his death. A full Commission was subsequently appointed to carry on the program of the state library agency.

The extension program of the Commission was enlarged, despite wartime conditions, through the establishment of

library demonstrations in Rapides, Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison and Acadia parishes, and the establishment of the statewide reference and loan service for Negroes.

During the years 1942-1945, the professional growth of libraries and librarianship was stimulated by the Commission through conferences on professional problems and co-operation in programs of library education.

The public relations activities of the Library Commission were strengthened by newspaper releases, the publication of a handbook on Louisiana parish libraries, a series of programs featuring authors, and the Citizens' Library Movement.

I. WARTIME CONDITIONS AFFECTED LIBRARIES

The Louisiana Library Commission adapted its program to wartime conditions and gave leadership to the libraries of the state by emphasizing the war-related functions of libraries and expanding the activities and services of the Commission, despite the restrictions and shortages of books and equipment. Library services were provided for the civilian populace and the armed forces in the area.

Wartime Demands and Difficulties

Before the United States entered World War II, the

Louisiana Library Commission recognized the role of the library in national defense and the responsibility of the library for meeting the needs of the civilian, military, and industrial population. A press release on the subject stated:

In its plan for cooperating in national defense in the state, the Louisiana Library Commission is including in its collection the newest titles on national defense subjects. . . .

For use in defense training centers and for individuals preparing for defense jobs the Library Commission has technical books on all trades and industries connected with the defense program and in addition the state agency has a wide selection of books on current world conditions, democracy and its meaning, and general information about the war.

'The duties of libraries in the national defense program include two important functions, supplying technical material for industrial workers and keeping people at home informed. The latter duty is just as necessary as the first, for an educated citizenry is the strongest defense against totalitarian ideas,' the Commission head declared.¹

The introduction to the Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943, included the following comment:

Wartime conditions present problems not experienced at any other time. Contrary to popular opinion, there is much greater demand for books and libraries than

¹News item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), July 22, 1941.

during peacetime. Libraries and librarians have been involved in the present conflict as never before in history. Books have been taken to the front lines, into fox holes and on planes and ships to far corners of the world as constant companions of the armed forces. Librarians have been enlisted for service in army camps, hospitals, and for War Information Centers all over the world. This new demand for trained librarians has caused a serious shortage on the home front. It has become increasingly difficult to recruit librarians for projects to take care of the greatly increased demand at home.²

In addition to recognizing the responsibilities of libraries to the defense program, the Commission emphasized the importance of strengthening existing libraries and establishing new libraries to provide general information for the public at large and in keeping the American way of life intact.³

The Executive Secretary of the Commission emphasized the fact that an essential part of any defense program is high civilian morale and urged all Americans, friends of libraries, trustees, and librarians to work for adequate provision for meeting the increasing civilian demands upon libraries.⁴

²Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 9.

³News item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), September 15, 1940.

⁴Essae M. Culver, "Miss Culver's Parting Message as President," American Library Association Bulletin, 35:413, July, 1941.

Readers' Services

After the United States entered World War II, the requests for informational services were intensified. The Library Commission felt the impact of serious reader interests all over the state, in the industrial areas and the isolated rural sections which had no library service or which were served by bookmobiles.⁵ The requests from readers indicated that people sought knowledge of subjects neglected during peacetime. In addition to the background facts on the war, many readers sought material to fit themselves for military or defense positions.⁶

The Library Commission was officially designated as a War Information Center. The Commission took a position of leadership in supplying sources of information for individuals and libraries throughout the state on war-related problems including: gas and tire rationing, food rationing, victory gardening, canning and preserving, sugar-saving recipes, streamlined cookery, child care, juvenile delinquency, ship yard work, engineering, various regulations of the armed forces, traditions and etiquette of life in the military and

⁵News item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), February 19, 1942.

⁶Ibid.

naval services.⁷

During the war years, the book collection of the Commission was enlarged in response to the increased demand for information from 153,722 volumes in December of 1943 to a total of 223,422 volumes in December of 1945. The number of requests for information increased from 64,548 during 1942-1943 to a total of 80,058 during 1944-1945.⁸

The following table shows the growth and use of the Commission library and reference services, and the number of reading certificates issued yearly from 1942 through 1945.⁹

Year	Total Book Collection	Total Circulation	Special Reference Requests	Reading Certificates
1942	144,721	673,863	32,718	590
1943	153,722	420,224	31,830	525
1944	193,740	485,404	40,643	451
1945	233,422	656,885	39,415	663

⁷News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), October 12, 1943.

⁸Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 20.

⁹Debra R. Abramson, "Reference Service," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:49, Spring, 1950. Also see Appendix, Table I on the Growth and Use of the Book Collection and Reference Services, p. 455.

Library Service to the Personnel of the Armed Forces

The Executive Secretary of the Library Commission was asked to visit army camps in the Fourth Corp Area by the Advisory Library Committee of the United States Office of Education, "to ascertain what book services were available and in what way libraries could cooperate."¹⁰

A survey was made of the libraries serving the armed forces located in the area, and the Library Commission offered to provide supplementary materials for the armed forces libraries. Immediately thereafter, the Library Commission received requests for information to augment the resources of the camp libraries. Many technical books and magazines were loaned to the men in service.¹¹ "One commanding officer stated that 2,000 men in his camp had access to books for promotional study not possible without the Louisiana Library Commission services."¹²

The demonstration libraries were instructed by the Library Commission as follows:

. . . [to] offer their services in every way possible to aid the war effort. The libraries in Sabine, Natchitoches, Winn, De Soto, and Caddo were especially

¹⁰Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 20.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

active in serving the military population, and several with the aid of board members and interested citizens, extended their hours in order to accommodate those who wished to spend evenings in the library.¹³

The military personnel and their families made use of the public library facilities of the state. In the Rapides Parish Library Demonstration, a branch library was opened at Camp Beauregard, and library service was provided at two U.S.O. Centers, one for the white soldiers and the other for the Negro soldiers.¹⁴

The parish libraries supplied general, technical and recreational reading materials for soldiers and received regular requests for information on Louisiana history, topography, place-names, products, flowers, people, animals, places to visit. The sources "on New Orleans and Huey Long were constantly in demand."¹⁵

The soldiers often commended the library service and asked how the Louisiana parish library system had been established and developed.¹⁶

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 18.

¹⁵Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 20.

¹⁶Ibid.

Some soldiers who were stationed at camps in Louisiana were studying toward the completion of extension courses from various colleges. Both the colleges and the individual students requested books from the Louisiana Library Commission for use in connection with the extension courses.¹⁷

The Louisiana Library Commission, through the Reference and Circulation Department, supplied materials to individuals and to parish libraries in response to the numerous and varied requests from military personnel. Among the unusual inquiries directed to the Commission was a request from a soldier who wanted to know the marriage laws of all the states located between Louisiana and California, where his fiancée lived, because he wanted to arrange to be married in the state which required "the least waiting."¹⁸

The libraries in the national defense effort were commended by Governor Sam H. Jones in a letter addressed to the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, which stated, in part:

I am indeed proud of the pleasure and privileges afforded soldiers by the libraries throughout the State. I think it speaks well for Louisiana as well as

¹⁷"Louisiana Library Commission," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 5:16, December, 1941.

¹⁸Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 24-25.

those in charge of library work. As Secretary of the Commission, I wish to congratulate you on your efforts.¹⁹

Victory Book Campaign

As a part of the total effort of national defense, Louisiana libraries and books were mobilized to aid in the National Victory Book Campaign to collect 10,000,000 books for soldiers, sailors, and marines. The Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission was the state director of the campaign, which was sponsored by the American Library Association, the Red Cross, and the United Service Organization.²⁰ The staff of the Library Commission contributed to this morale program for the men in service in the organization of the project, and in the collecting, sorting, and packing books which were sent to the various U.S.O. reading rooms.²¹

Comments from Borrowers

The following comments on the services of the Library Commission were made voluntarily by individual borrowers in

¹⁹"Louisiana Library Commission," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 5:16-17, December, 1941.

²⁰"Victory Book Campaign," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 5:12, December, 1941.

²¹Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 16.

letters addressed to the Commission and the Executive Secretary:

A reader from Eunice, Louisiana wrote:

You are more than kind to take enough interest in individual readers to make such constructive suggestions as I know you so often make, and I do want you to know that I, for one, greatly appreciate your cooperation.²²

A teacher stated:

For quite some time I have been anxious to express my appreciation to you of the splendid advantages which the Louisiana Library Commission through the medium of our present parish library system has put at the disposal of the people of Terrebonne Parish.

No praise can be too high for the wonderful opportunities extended to our people, particularly those in the rural districts. As a teacher, I have taken a great interest in the development of the library services and have had an opportunity to note directly the effect of available reading material upon children in the age group of 11 to 16 years, a period when reading interests are most vital to school work. I have observed a definite improvement in the average reading ability of my classes since the advent of our rural branch and a greater trend toward the selective reading of non-fiction. This increased motivation has greatly facilitated the learning process and work of the teacher.

The Commission has been most helpful on countless occasions in providing me with material of various kinds for school as well as personal use.

Upon thinking back over the years when we were without a library, I sometimes wonder how we got along

²²Letter from Amelia Greenwald of Eunice, Louisiana, to the Louisiana Library Commission, May 5, 1942 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

without it. I trust that the war will not disturb library service, as I feel that it is more vital to us now than ever before and has a definite place in our war program.²³

Several other borrowers commented:

I would like to thank you, and all those with you, for the pleasure afforded through your efficient service in conducting this wonderful library. What a grand opportunity for the welfare of our State is the Louisiana Library Commission! Ignorance is the only sin. Surely you are doing your share to fight it.²⁴

. . . I want to thank you for your kind, lenient co-operation in lending me books which have finally enabled me to establish a growing typist and mimeographing business which I operate at home. The books I've borrowed have also helped me in my other work.²⁵

. . . I passed the examination for citizenship, thanks to you for sending the right kind of books for me to read. They really did help me a lot.²⁶

²³Letter from Carol Lee Tucker of Houma, Louisiana, to Essae M. Culver, June 8, 1942 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

²⁴Letter from Dora Jaufrond of Covington, Louisiana, to the Louisiana Library Commission, September 11, 1942 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

²⁵Letter from Robert E. Starns of Hammond, Louisiana, to the Louisiana Library Commission, March 22, 1944 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

²⁶Letter from Mollie August of De Ridder, Louisiana, to the Louisiana Library Commission, November 20, 1945 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

II. ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENTS

The administration of the Louisiana Library Commission was affected during the years 1942-1945 by varied and significant events including the death of J. O. Modisette, who was acting as a one-man Library Commission; the decision of the Supreme Court of Louisiana declaring the reorganizational legislation of the State government unconstitutional; the appointment of a Library Commission with full membership; wartime threats of decreased financial support; the classification of library personnel under the State Civil Service; increased demands for parish library demonstrations; and inadequate housing. These developments are covered in the sections to follow.

Status and Membership of the Louisiana Library Commission

The official lay leadership of the Library Commission was the responsibility of J. O. Modisette, acting as a one-man Commission, from 1940 until the time of his last illness and death on June 19, 1942. Modisette was carrying on the work of the Commission board alone, pending the implementation of the reorganization of the State government according to the action of the Legislature of 1940, when the entire State reorganizational program was declared unconstitutional

by the Louisiana Supreme Court.²⁷

No action had been taken on the plan of the Legislature to transfer the program of the Library Commission to Louisiana State University when the decision of the Louisiana Supreme Court, declaring the reorganizational acts unconstitutional, was rendered in May of 1942. The Library Commission, therefore, continued to function according to Act 225 of 1920, and a new Commission was subsequently named.²⁸

In December of 1942, Governor Sam H. Jones appointed a full Library Commission composed of the following members: Frank Voelker of Lake Providence; Mary Mims, Extension Sociologist of Louisiana State University; C. B. Hodges, President of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge; Lois Janvier Lester of Bains; J. A. Ingram of Boyce. Essae M. Culver continued as Executive Secretary of the Commission.²⁹ Frank Voelker was elected Chairman of the Library Commission

²⁷Margaret Dixon and Nantelle Gittinger, "The First Twenty-Five Years," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:45-46, Spring, 1950; and Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:45, Spring, 1953.

²⁸Culver, loc. cit.

²⁹Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 5.

and served in that capacity during the period 1942-1945.³⁰

After the death of C. B. Hodges in November of 1944, C. A. Ives, Professor Emeritus of Education of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, was appointed as a member of the Commission.³¹

Finances

The financial support of the Library Commission was jeopardized in 1942, due first, to an attitude of governing officials that no new libraries would be started in wartime, and secondly, a threat of a veto by Governor Sam H. Jones of the entire appropriation for the Library Commission.³²

Prior to the legislative session of 1942, the Budget Director of Louisiana recommended a thirty per cent cut in the budget of the Library Commission, based on the assumption that no new demonstration libraries would be started during the biennium; and the financial conditions of the state

³⁰Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 5.

³¹Ibid.

³²Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 13; and Essae M. Culver, and Nantelle M. Gittinger, "A History of the Citizens' Library Movement," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:22, Winter, 1944.

caused Governor Jones to advocate the elimination of the services of the Library Commission.³³

The governing officials assured the Library Commission, however, that if popular demand for library service in the State was sustained or increased, an effort would be made to secure additional funds for the Library Commission.³⁴

The members of the Citizens' Library Movement were alerted, and it was reported that:

. . . greatest single accomplishment of the state-wide organization came in 1942, when the Governor announced that because state funds were so low it would be necessary to veto the entire Library Commission appropriation and cut out the services of the agency altogether.

Literally hundreds of messages reached the Governor's office. One message was particularly eloquent, pleading, 'For God's sake don't take books away from the people in the most illiterate state in the Union.' The appropriation was not vetoed.³⁵

When the people of Louisiana made the officials aware that they wanted library services, the Board of Liquidation of Louisiana voted that the sum of \$87,168.39 be made available to the Louisiana Library Commission on July 20, 1943,

³³Ibid.

³⁴Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 13.

³⁵Culver and Gittinger, loc. cit.

which restored the amount cut from the requested budget.³⁶

The State appropriations for the Library Commission from 1942-1945 amounted to: \$87,654.00 in 1942; \$167,387.48 in 1943; \$159,144.51 in 1944; and \$150,000.00 in 1945. The financial records of the Commission were reorganized under the Department of Finance of the State.³⁷

Classification of Personnel

The personnel of the Library Commission were classified during 1942 under the State Civil Service program, which required much of the time of the Executive Secretary and the Assistant Secretary of the Commission. In accordance with the request of the Civil Service Department, a member of the Commission staff, Debora R. Abramson, was assigned to be the contact person with the Civil Service Department.³⁸

Demand for Demonstration Libraries

The Administrative Department of the Commission, which directed and handled the campaigning for the establishment of

³⁶Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 13.

³⁷Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), pp. 11, 28; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 37-38.

³⁸Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 11.

new libraries in the State, noted an increasing state-wide awareness of the importance of parish libraries during 1942-1945. Various communities expressed an interest in having a library in their parish and sought information on the method of library establishment. Police Juries in Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison, Acadia, and Washington parishes established parish libraries by ordinance, then petitioned the Library Commission for a one-year library demonstration.³⁹

. . . Over the years Louisianians had at last learned the meaning of good library service. The groundwork had been well laid, people had been informed on libraries by newspaper and magazine articles, talks by Commission staff members to countless clubs and organizations in every section of the State, word of mouth from satisfied library borrowers, and by observing the functions of libraries in neighboring parishes.

Now, parishes began applying for Commission-sponsored libraries more rapidly than it was possible to open the demonstrations. As a police jury took the initial step of legally establishing a library by ordinance, the parish was placed on the Commission list to await its turn for a demonstration.⁴⁰

The promotional activities of the Administrative Department of the Commission resulted during the years 1942-1945 in the opening of one-year library demonstrations in Rapides, Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison, and Acadia parishes. Preliminary contacts were made in Lafourche, Iberia,

³⁹Dixon, op. cit., p. 46.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Evangeline, and Avoyelles parishes which ultimately resulted in the establishment of libraries and the demonstration of library services by the Library Commission.⁴¹

Inadequate Housing

The overall program of service of the Library Commission was handicapped by the lack of functional working space. The inadequacy of the housing facilities of the Library Commission was recognized in a report of the Planning Division of the Louisiana Department of Public Works for 1942-1943.⁴²

The report on the buildings housing agencies of the State government with accompanying recommendations for the post war period, stated:

. . . The principal deterrent to the program of the Louisiana Library Commission is the inadequacy and obsolescence of existing housing facilities. Part of the Commission library, consisting of about 90,000 volumes, is presently housed in the Old Hill Memorial Library Building on the grounds of the Department of Highways. This building was built about 44 years ago to house a then small university library and is not adequate in any respect for the functioning of an up-to-date State library agency.

The principal deficiencies in the library building

⁴¹Dixon, loc. cit.; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 13-14.

⁴²"Louisiana Library Commission," Biennial Report of the State of Louisiana, Department of Public Works; 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 122-123.

are as follows:

Inadequate floor space, resulting in congestion and fire hazard. . . .

Improper design, imposing hardships and loss of time on staff and public and damage to books.

Inadequate rest rooms for staff--none for public.

Inadequate wiring for proper lighting; also fire hazard.

No parking space available to the public.

Recommendations:

1. The construction of a building to house the library and to provide for twenty years' growth, the plans to be provided by the Louisiana Library Commission.

2. That the library building be located on the Capitol grounds within easy access of all State offices, and that space be designated and set aside by the Legislature for the purpose.

3. That since the Louisiana Library Commission has no funds other than the appropriation made for administration and operation of the library services by the Legislature biennially, that funds for the erection of a building be requested of the State to be supplemented by such other aid as becomes available.⁴³

III. DEATH OF J. O. MODISETTE, FRIEND OF LIBRARIES,

MEMBER OF THE LIBRARY COMMISSION

The death of James Oliver Modisette, which occurred on June 19, 1942, terminated the career of a distinguished lay leader of the Louisiana library program. The tributes which were paid to J. O. Modisette form a part of the history of the Louisiana Library Commission, since they record the

⁴³Ibid., p. 122.

work of the Chairman of the Library Commission, "a devoted, persevering, and effective champion of more and better libraries and library services for Louisiana's people,"⁴⁴ and they include commentaries on the leadership qualities which contributed to the state-wide program of library development of the Commission.⁴⁵ Certain excerpts from the printed tributes to James Oliver Modisette are, therefore, included in this study.

An article in the Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, which was written in appreciation of the life, character, and contribution to the library profession of the man who headed the Louisiana Library Commission stated, in part:

'Progress is not automatic,' said Jane Addams, 'and if things are ever to move forward some man must be willing to take the first steps and assume the risks. Such a man must have courage,' and such a man was James Oliver Modisette when he stepped forward, offering his services to promote the cause of libraries in 1925. He had courage to face opposition of those in high places in forwarding support and legislation for Louisiana libraries; and he never wavered in his belief in and efforts for extending book service to every corner of the state. He stepped out ahead of our profession in his leadership and never wavered in his enthusiasm for providing books for all the people of

⁴⁴Editorial in the Times-Picayune (New Orleans, Louisiana), June 22, 1942.

⁴⁵"James Oliver Modisette," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 6:2-4, September-December, 1942.

his state. As a citizen he held his state and her educational institutions as the objective of his services, and in their behalf worked unceasingly without expectation of remuneration or even appreciation. Such a life needs no eulogy--it speaks for itself.

Born in a rural parish at a time when only an elementary school education was provided in the community in which he lived, and when no library service was within a hundred miles, he struggled for an education which we today take for granted. Every cent he could earn working on his father's farm he spent for books. He worked his way through elementary, high and normal school and then taught for a few years in order to finance his course in law school, from which he received the Bachelor and Master degrees, and finally the Doctor of Civil Law degree. Whatever he undertook he did honestly and well and always expected the best from others working with him.

Those who worked with him at the Commission have often expressed their gratitude for his patience and guidance in all the business affairs and financial records he so carefully supervised. His legal advice was of constant help in the many problems connected with parish and regional demonstrations and in working with police juries and the State Legislature. His knowledge of people and places and his good common-sense always came to our rescue in conferences and on problems and policies.

He served the Louisiana Library Association as its president for two terms and attended its annual meetings whenever his heavy court schedule permitted. . . .

He was a member of the Jennings Public Library Board for some years prior to his appointment to the Louisiana Library Commission and always took pride and pleasure in seeking out new ideas for improvement of library services, whether public, school or college libraries, because he was interested in every kind of library.

.
 . . . Mr. Modisette's contribution to Louisiana was presented . . . to the Trustees Section (of the American Library Association) for consideration, and . . . from all the trustees of the United States and Canada, he was

chosen to receive the Citation of Merit bestowed for the third time by the American Library Association.⁴⁶

The following commentary, written by the Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, appeared in the American Library Association Bulletin:

At the Milwaukee conference the Jury on Citation of Trustees of the American Library Association awarded to the late James Oliver Modisette the Citation of Merit in recognition of his years of devoted and untiring efforts in behalf of public library development.

He was known throughout Louisiana as the 'library man,' and was proud of his title. Although his interests and connections were broad--he was active in his local and district Rotary Club, the Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, Masonry, Business Men's Club of Jennings, and in many legal and educational organizations--his primary interest was libraries. In the lower left-hand corner of his business card was printed 'Interested in Public Libraries.' The simple method of calling attention to public libraries gained the interest and support of many influential people.

Shortly after the opening of the commission in 1925, he volunteered his service to the executive secretary of the library commission. Louisiana needed a new public library law and Mr. Modisette was asked to draft a new act. He studied the laws of other states, consulted with leaders in Louisiana, drafted a new act, presented it to the legislature, lobbied for it, and was influential in securing the passage of the act. All library legislation of the past fifteen years has been drafted and promoted in a like manner.

In 1940 when the government of Louisiana was reorganized by the legislature . . . (Mr. Modisette was) asked by the Governor to take full responsibility for the commission during the two years allowed for the reorganization, he accepted the responsibility and gave untiringly

⁴⁶Ibid.

of his time and energies.

During the sixteen years (fifteen of them as chairman) that Mr. Modisette served the commission, he demonstrated his belief that a trustee's job is to interpret the library to governing bodies and to the people. He worked at this job endlessly, and as a result, the Louisiana Citizens Library Movement with about 350,000 members was organized under his chairmanship. This organization demonstrated forcefully the value of a well-informed citizenry this year when the Governor threatened to veto the appropriation for the Louisiana Library Commission. When people realized that the library commission might be discontinued, thousands of letters, telegrams, and telephone calls poured into the Governor's office from citizens of every parish in the state, convincing the Governor that people wanted books and library services. At the time Mr. Modisette was in the hospital and too ill to know that under his leadership the Louisiana Library Commission had become the service institution close to every man, woman, and child in Louisiana.

He was not only active in his own state but served on a number of A.L.A. committees, as a member of the Library Extension Board, and as an active member of the Trustees Division.

A phrase which gives a word picture of him as he truly wished to be remembered is 'A Friend of Libraries.'⁴⁷

The meaning of the efforts of J. O. Modisette in the lives of the people of Louisiana was expressed in an editorial which appeared in the Morning Advocate of Baton Rouge, as follows:

⁴⁷Essae M. Culver, "James Oliver Modisette: Friend of Libraries," American Library Association Bulletin, 36: 817-18, December 1, 1942.

The reader with access to a city or parish library and the farm woman who goes out to meet the bookmobile lost a friend Friday when J. O. Modisette died in a New Orleans hospital. Mr. Modisette, one of Louisiana's most widely known attorneys, had been chairman of the Louisiana Library commission for 15 years.

His eagerness to spread the wealth that reading brings led him to accept no pay for the legal services he gave the commission. He directed its affairs and took his pay in the satisfaction that each succeeding year added thousands of Louisianians who were given an opportunity to read books they could not always buy.

Though a resident of Jennings, Mr. Modisette was a familiar and welcome figure in Baton Rouge. He was a member active in the work of a number of service and civic organizations.

He led a full life, as a youthful missionary among the Indians of Oklahoma, a school teacher and principal in Cheneyville and Campti High Schools, and then earned the degrees of a bachelor and a master of law in the Illinois college of law in Chicago.

He pioneered in advocating state and federal aid for libraries as a way of developing a library system which would reach beyond the confines of the city. Since 1937 he had led the Citizens' library movement in the state to its present membership of 350,000. Mr. Modisette seldom missed an opportunity to make a friend. No country road deterred him when he went to speak to a community interested in establishing a library.

Long hours of earnest talk and answering questions for the people at these meetings he considered well spent.

Born near the small country town of Shongaloo, Mr. Modisette never forgot the crossroads store view in all his 60 years as a lawyer and booklover. Because he did not, thousands of Louisianians can go up now to the branch library, and say, 'Give me that copy of the atlas, Miss Sally, and let me have Berlin Diary for a moment.'

I've got some checking up to do.⁴⁸

IV. EXTENSION PROGRAM

The work of the Extension Department of the Library Commission was expanded during the war years, despite numerous difficulties including: the shortage of personnel and the large turn-over in staff membership; the difficulty of securing books due to the paper shortage and wartime restrictions; the handicap of governmental restrictions on transportation and the lack of bookmobiles to serve small communities and rural areas; the difficulty of securing locations for distributions centers in crowded communities; and the lack of lumber, furniture, and other needed equipment.⁴⁹

In response to a generally recognized and felt need, the Negro reference and loan library was opened at Southern University in June of 1943, under the direction and supervision of the Extension Department of the Library Commission.⁵⁰

Demonstration libraries were conducted by the

⁴⁸Editorial in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), June 22, 1942.

⁴⁹Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 16-20.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 18-20.

Extension Department in Rapides, Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison, and Acadia parishes. The Director of the Extension Department supervised the operation of the demonstrations and also gave advisory service on matters of administration and service in established libraries, as time and travel regulations permitted.⁵¹ Accounts of the service to Negroes and the demonstration libraries are presented in the sections to follow.

Service to Negroes

The Louisiana Library Commission considered carefully the need for providing reliable and accurate information for the Negro citizens of the state. The development of library service for Negroes was impeded by the lack of functionally planned space in the headquarters of the Commission.⁵²

When, in 1943, the need for a book collection for Negro citizens became acute, there was no room in the headquarters of the Commission for such a department. An appeal for quarters was made to Southern University. Dr. J. S.

⁵¹Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), pp. 17-20; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 16-20.

⁵²Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:45, Spring, 1953.

Clark, President of the University, "very generously offered space in the Administration Building (of Southern University), with an outside entrance."⁵³

Plans for the library service were made by the Extension Department of the Library Commission. A trained Negro librarian, Carrie C. Robinson, was employed to serve the Negro patrons; and 1,489 volumes were provided in the initial collection, which was to be enlarged as requests were received for additional material.⁵⁴

In planning the service to Negroes, the Commission adopted the same policies which govern the other reference services of the Commission, namely, that "the service is primarily for adults and does not provide fiction or children's books."⁵⁵

The Negro reference and loan library was started officially on June 17, 1943. The service was originally called the "Louisiana Library Commission Service for Colored People" upon the advice of several of the Negro

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), pp. 19-20.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 19.

educational leaders in the state.⁵⁶

The service to Negroes subsequently became known as the Negro Branch, and the Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 stated:

The Negro Reference and Loan Library is a branch of the Library Commission serving the Negro population of the state and paralleling the services given by the Library Commission. It was opened in June, 1943, in space offered by the President of Southern University. . . .

The location has proved advantageous. Southern University gives leadership in the state and draws students from several parishes, many of whom become teachers and take back to their homes a knowledge of the services which the Reference and Loan Library provides. These services are used by schools as well as by individuals and local libraries.

Use of the Branch has grown steadily with 49 of the 64 parishes making 8,431 requests for books of information and general reading during the biennium. The most effective stimulation has been through visits to Summer Schools and workshops by the professional librarian in charge of the Branch. Large collections of books were loaned for these courses. Weekly news stories in several papers with lists of books have drawn readers, and a Reading Certificate is offered for a reading course during the year.

The librarian of the Negro service visited Summer School Workshops, a Rural Leadership Conference, the State meetings of the Colored P.T.A. and Teacher's Association where she participated in programs and discussed the services of the Negro Reference Branch. She also visited the public and college libraries in several sections where group meetings were held.

⁵⁶Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), p. 20.

During 1945 periodical subscriptions were added to the collection. The book collection increased to the point where it was necessary to double the shelving, and a clerical assistant was added to the staff. . . .

Thirteen parish libraries have Negro branches . . . (which) take advantage of the reference service offered by the Negro Reference Branch of the Library Commission which lends books of a type the local library would not need on a permanent basis, or which was beyond its price range.⁵⁷

The use of the reference service increased steadily from the time of the opening of the service.⁵⁸ By the end of the year 1943, the library had received requests for books or information totaling 1,651; and the requests were received from twenty-three parishes, including Negro branch libraries, schools, teachers, ministers, and various citizens living in parishes where public library service for Negroes was not available.⁵⁹ In 1944 the branch circulated 3,047 volumes and had a record of 4,055 requests for information; and in 1945 there was a slight increase in the circulation which totaled 3,204 volumes and the record of requests in-

⁵⁷Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 19-20.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 20.

⁵⁹Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), loc. cit.

creased to 4,376.⁶⁰

The activities of the Negro Branch were directed and supervised by the Director of Extension of the Louisiana Library Commission.⁶¹

Demonstrations

Accounts of the demonstration libraries conducted by the Extension Department of the Library Commission during the years 1942-1945 in Rapides, Calcasieu, Tangipahoa, Madison, and Acadia parishes are presented in the sections to follow.

Rapides Parish Library Demonstration. The need for parish-wide library service in the Rapides defense area was brought to the attention of the Library Commission in 1941. The Field Representative of the Commission, Sallie J. Farrell, was sent to Rapides Parish in August of 1941 to survey conditions and initiate a promotional and organizational program as a background for the opening of the demonstration library.⁶²

On September 9, 1941, after the field worker contacted governing authorities, civic and educational groups, and

⁶⁰Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 20.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Sallie J. Farrell, "Rapides Parish Library Demonstration, 1942" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1943), p. (1).

community leaders, the Police Jury passed an ordinance establishing the Rapides Parish Library.⁶³

The Police Jury appropriated \$3,000.00 for local support of the demonstration library, and a budget of \$35,829.82 was provided by the Library Commission for the Rapides Parish Library Demonstration.⁶⁴

Since the Commission was unable to secure the services of another professionally trained and experienced librarian, Sallie J. Farrell was released by the Commission to become the librarian of the Rapides demonstration.⁶⁵

Arrangements were made for branches throughout the parish. The various town councils assisted with the securing of housing and equipment.⁶⁶

The Work Projects Administration and the National Youth Administration gave assistance by supplying workers for the Rapides demonstration; and 12,896 books were added to the collection by the Work Projects Administration.⁶⁷

The library service in Rapides Parish opened January 16, 1942 to serve the largest civilian and military population recorded for any demonstration library in the

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 24.

⁶⁶Farrell, loc. cit.

⁶⁷Ibid.

State. The population in Rapides Parish had increased from the 73,370 persons enumerated in the 1940 census to an estimated 90,000 residents at the time the demonstration was planned; and the largest population serviced by a demonstration library prior to the one in Rapides Parish was less than 50,000.⁶⁸

In organizing the library demonstration, the large military population called for a variety of services, "since one camp of less than 5,000 men had no library, and one Federal Housing project offered a fertile field for bookmobile service."⁶⁹

A program was held in the assembly room of the Court House in Alexandria marking the official opening of the Rapides Parish Library Demonstration; and branches were opened in Pineville, Boyce, Lecompte, Cheneyville, Tioga, Camp Beauregard, Bolton Avenue USO Club, and the Carver Branch for Negroes. The bookmobile made fifty-eight regular stops on a bi-weekly schedule, and visited various sections of the parish, stopping at schools, filling stations, trailer camps, a government housing project, country stores, and at

⁶⁸Ninth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1940-1941 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1942), p. 32.

⁶⁹Ibid.

crossroads "plainly marked with large signs contributed by the Coca-Cola Company."⁷⁰

The Alexandria Public Library, located in the parish seat of Rapides, was one of the five public libraries which were established in Louisiana before the Louisiana Library Commission started its program of parish-wide library development in 1925;⁷¹ and while the Alexandria Public Library maintained its autonomy, its resources were augmented by large indefinite loans of books from the Rapides Parish Library Demonstration. A daily loan service to the Alexandria Public Library was arranged by the demonstration librarian; and the Headquarters library of the demonstration, located in the Court House in Alexandria, was opened to the public to make library service more easily accessible to the citizens of Alexandria.⁷²

During 1942 the circulation of the Rapides Parish Library Demonstration totaled 135,137 volumes; 20,576 of which were circulated to military personnel. The registration for the period was 7,344, with 4,099 adult borrowers

⁷⁰Farrell, op. cit., pp. (1)-2.

⁷¹First Annual Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1925-1926 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1927), p. (13).

⁷²Farrell, op. cit., p. 2.

and 3,245 children. Included in the registration were 1,565 persons who were in the military service. Over 4,000 requests for specialized information were filled, from the parish collection and through the Reference and Circulation Department of the Library Commission.⁷³

The matter of securing local support for the Rapides Parish Library, after the demonstration conducted by the Library Commission, was presented to the Police Jury at their regular meeting in September, 1942. All members of the Board of Control of the Library were present at the meeting, and the members of the Police Jury indicated interest in the library, with the exception of the jurors from Ward One, Alexandria.⁷⁴ The Police Jury took no action until a special meeting on September 18, and it was reported:

. . . three influential Alexandria citizens with large interests appeared before the Jury at the request of one of the Alexandria jurors advising against the calling of a tax election. In spite of this important, weighty opposition, the country members were still in favor of calling the election; and at another special meeting September 29th, after eight and a half months of library service, the Police Jury ordered a special tax election for November 5th for the purpose of giving the property taxpayer residents an opportunity to vote on the proposition of a one mill tax for five years to maintain and support the parish library. Attending this meeting and speaking enthusiastically for

⁷³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 3.

the continuation of parish-wide library service were representatives from Alexandria and the parish.⁷⁵

An intensive campaign for the library tax was waged for thirty-eight days before the election. Local committees were appointed to every community in the parish to publicize the library, to contact all taxpayers, to distribute publicity material, and utilize other ways to promote the passage of the one mill tax.⁷⁶

Community organizations devoted time to the discussion of the library tax. The speaker for each occasion was "either a member of the organization or an interested outsider willing to discuss the proposition."⁷⁷

In addition to this individual and group contact work, publicity mediums included the local newspaper, local radio station, two outside billboards, mimeographed form letters to parents distributed through the branches and bookmobile, and mimeographed vari-colored flyers distributed by the local committees.

Newspaper publicity included general stories about the service with accompanying cuts, letters to the editor from representative citizens from all over the parish, and endorsements from many clubs and organizations. A paid quarter page advertisement contributed by an interested citizen headed 'Germany Burns Books-- America Provides Books,' was impressive.⁷⁸

Weekly radio publicity in the form of general book features and interviews on the library was arranged at no

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Ibid. ⁷⁷Ibid., p. 5.

⁷⁸Ibid.

cost to the library. Brief spot announcements were planned by the library and used two days before election.⁷⁹

Examples of the radio announcements used in the campaign for the tax election are:

In voting to support the Rapides Parish Library November 5th, property taxpayers will follow the urgent suggestion of Britain's prime minister, Winston Churchill, and our own state head, President Roosevelt, both of whom have publicly stated that libraries are an essential part of a progressive community. By voting for the support of your parish library you will provide your children the opportunity to read and learn and become intelligent citizens of a free democratic country.

The man who leads is the man who reads. From Rapides Parish Library, men, women, and children may get books on any subject to help them in business, trades, home duties, and education. Go to the polls on November 5th and vote for the one-mill library tax which will make it possible to keep your parish library with all its wide variety of books. Vote to give every man, woman, and child in Rapides parish the chance to learn through reading. The tax is small and the profits from reading books are lifelong and limitless.⁸⁰

When the results of the election were tabulated, the library tax was assured. The total property vote for the library tax was \$1,237,246.00 and the vote against the tax was \$1,188,900.00. There were 492 popular votes in favor of the library tax and 108 popular votes against the tax.⁸¹

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 4-6.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 6.

The librarian of the demonstration library, in appraising the service, stated that the success of the tax election gave evidence that the library had been recognized as a vital service institution. The library had reached an estimated 47 per cent of the people outside the parish seat of Alexandria, but of the large population only 7,344 persons were registered, and "of the total 135,137 books circulated during the year, 124,342 of these were circulated outside the city limits of Alexandria."⁸² The 4,572 registered borrowers of the Alexandria Public Library had received indirect service from the Rapides Parish Library. While the demonstration was successfully concluded, there was evidence of a need for improving the library service to the residents of Alexandria.⁸³

Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration. The Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration which opened on April 4, 1944, was planned to serve a rapidly growing and developing community. Calcasieu parish had been largely an agricultural community, producing rice, cotton, and live stock, prior to the development of the channel and port facilities in 1926. During the years following the opening of the port, Lake

⁸²Ibid., p. 7.

⁸³Ibid.

Charles, the parish seat, became a center of agriculture, industry, and transportation; and as a result of World War II, five new industrial plants were opened in the parish. The Lake Charles Army Air Base was completed and occupied in 1942, with 3,500 to 4,500 men stationed on the base. An influx of population was housed in trailer camps and housing projects constructed to accommodate the newcomers. In 1944 the estimated population of Calcasieu Parish was 73,485.⁸⁴

Preliminary to the initiation of the library demonstration, the field worker of the Library Commission spent the summer of 1943 in Calcasieu Parish carrying on a promotional campaign with "the wholehearted cooperation of the Police Jury, and the active interest and participation of individuals and organizations throughout the parish."⁸⁵

Genuine concern for the success of the library program existed among the citizens of the parish, from the teenage boy who advised the librarian to see a certain community leader because he had confidence in education, to the president of the Police Jury who recognized the role of the library in combatting juvenile delinquency.⁸⁶

⁸⁴Sallie J. Farrell, "Louisiana's Newest Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 7:4-5, March-June, 1944.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁸⁶Ibid.

The library demonstration was conducted according to the established policies of the Library Commission; and the Extension Department of the Library Commission directed the demonstration and processed 17,000 volumes for the initial collection of the Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration. The collection was selected to cover a wide range of subjects and reading levels for the adults and children in the parish, including the technical books needed by industry and business, and the books on agriculture needed in the rural sections of the parish which had remained unchanged by the sudden industrial and military developments.⁸⁷

The demonstration library served the people of the parish through "a network of fifteen branch libraries and a headquarters library in the city of Lake Charles."⁸⁸ The branches were located in Bell City, DeQuincy, Edgerly, English Bayou, Fairview, Gillis, Hayes, Iowa, La Grange, Maplewood, Prairieland, Starks, Sulphur, Vinton, and Westlake. The headquarters library and six of the branches were in rented buildings, and the other nine were located in quarters which were rent-free, including three branches in schools.

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁸⁸Sallie J. Farrell, "Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration, 1944" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1945), p. (1).

The branches, with local women as custodians, were open from four to fifteen hours per week depending upon the size of the community, with the exception of the branch library which was located in the town of Sulphur, with an estimated population of 9,000. The Sulphur branch of the Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration was opened daily, and the assistant in charge of the branch was a college graduate with six semester hours of credit in library science.⁸⁹

The book collections in the branches ranged from 300 volumes in the smaller branches to 4,000 volumes in the largest one. The collections were changed to meet the needs of readers, with all branches having equal access to the entire book collection of the parish library.⁹⁰ The Carnegie Library in the city of Lake Charles, one of the five municipal libraries established by law and operating in Louisiana when the Commission initiated the plan of parish library development in 1925, continued its program as an autonomous agency; and the Carnegie Library had full access to all books in the collection of the Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration. A collection of 1,034 books from the parish library was placed on permanent loan at the Carnegie Library. Books for the citizens of Lake Charles were made available by a

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. (1)-2.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 2.

daily loan service from the parish library to the Carnegie Library, since the headquarters of the parish library did not issue books directly to individual borrowers in Lake Charles.⁹¹

Citizens throughout the parish profited from the use of the library. Among the registered borrowers and users of the library were farmers, lawyers, public accountants, welders, carpenters, teachers, business men, chemists, ministers, housewives, students. A study of the occupations of the patrons of the library showed that the patrons of the library included men and women and boys and girls from all walks of life.⁹²

People read for information, inspiration, profit, personal development, and recreation. Farmers used books on farm machinery and equipment to an advantage; industrial workers reported improvement of their work through studying books on welding, carpentry, and diesel motors; chemists made use of technical books on chemical engineering, gas analysis, petroleum engineering; oil field workers received information on oil rigging and construction; cattlemen learned more about cattle raising and the development of

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid.

pasture lands from books in the collection of the parish library.⁹³

Information was provided for interested patrons on the organization of nursery schools, patents, grafting pecan trees, real estate procedures, personnel management, salesmanship, boatbuilding, artificial pollenization of plants, repair and operation of centrifugal pumps, commercial fishing, industrial refrigeration, choral speaking, diet in disease, judging and rating efficiency of workers, and various other subjects which affected the lives and interests of the patrons.⁹⁴

The library rendered services to various organizations of the parish, including cultural, civic and service clubs, church groups, Parent-Teacher Associations, YMCA, Boy Scouts, and Camp Fire Girls. The services of the parish library were discussed at meetings of fifty-one different groups or organizations.⁹⁵

Contacts with individual patrons indicated that young people were "reading eagerly books that will help make them better citizens of the new world."⁹⁶ Adults were "deriving help, inspiration, courage, and diversion from books on the

⁹³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 3.

⁹⁶Ibid.

shelves of the library . . . background for understanding the problems of the postwar world."⁹⁷

In assessing the work of the library, the interested, enthusiastic custodians of the branches were considered an asset to the demonstration. The librarian indicated, however, that the lack of a bookmobile with the proper supervision of a trained librarian materially lessened library usage.⁹⁸

By the end of 1944, the Calcasieu Parish Library had circulated 81,440 books to 4,755 registered borrowers, and had a record of the circulation of 9,011 books from the parish library to patrons of the Carnegie Library in Lake Charles.⁹⁹

At the beginning of the year 1945, the officials of the library began making plans to secure local support for the Calcasieu Parish Library. Before presenting the matter of a tax election to the Police Jury, the Board of Control of the library approved a tentative budget, and the librarian discussed the cost of the maintenance of the library with the leading citizens and the largest taxpayers.¹⁰⁰ The Board of Directors of the Lake Charles Association of Commerce

⁹⁷Ibid. ⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 3-4. ⁹⁹Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁰⁰Sallie J. Farrell, "Calcasieu Parish Library Demonstration, January-April, 1945" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1945), p. (1).

endorsed the proposed tax before the Police Jury was requested to call the election.¹⁰¹

When the request for the library tax election was presented to the Police Jury of Calcasieu Parish on February 6, 1945, the Police Jury voted unanimously in favor of the election.¹⁰²

In campaigning for the library tax, every organized group in the parish was contacted. In Lake Charles and the towns and communities of the parish, organizations acted to endorse the library tax.¹⁰³

Newspaper stories were carried in the parish papers, spot announcements were used on the radio, and letters containing facts about the library were sent to various individuals, who might be influential, and to the election commissioners.¹⁰⁴

On March 24, 1945, a three-quarters of a mill property tax was passed in the tax election to secure local support for the Calcasieu Parish Library. The results of the election showed that the property vote for the tax was \$2,235,383.00 and against the tax was \$12,730.00; and the popular vote was 397 votes for the tax and 14 votes against

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 3-4.

the tax.¹⁰⁵

In concluding the report on the demonstration, the librarian stated that "in April, 1944, the Calcasieu Parish Library was an untried, novel idea."¹⁰⁶ In May of 1945 it had "become a necessary part of the educational and recreational equipment of the parish . . . an essential institution alert to the needs of adults and children."¹⁰⁷

A statistical summary showed that the demonstration library had 5,643 registered borrowers; a total circulation of 132,921 volumes; and a collection of 25,421 books. It had filled 3,274 special requests. The total expenditures of the project amounted to \$50,256.96 of which the Louisiana Library Commission had spent \$46,453.39 and \$3,803.57 was provided for the library demonstration by Calcasieu Parish.¹⁰⁸

Tangipahoa Parish Library Demonstration. Ten years before a library demonstration was opened in Tangipahoa Parish, citizens of the Loranger Community expressed an interest in having a library and asked the Louisiana Library Commission for information concerning the method of securing a public library. During the period of 1934 to 1944 various

¹⁰⁵Ibid., p. (1). ¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 5. ¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 4-5.

persons representing different organizations in the parish contacted the Library Commission. The Executive Secretary of the Commission met with the interested groups to discuss the procedure for securing a demonstration library in Tangipahoa Parish.¹⁰⁹

As the library movement gained momentum, the Executive Secretary of the Library Commission contacted civic and community leaders. The Librarian of Southeastern Louisiana College, Anna Davis, took an active part in the development of the parish library, supplying the Commission with information concerning the parish officials and the leaders of service clubs and community organizations, and discussing and explaining the project to the citizens of the area.¹¹⁰

On September 10, 1943, a conference with the President of the Tangipahoa Parish Police Jury, concerning the possibility of securing an appropriation of \$1,500 from the Police Jury as a local fund for the library demonstration, encouraged the Executive Secretary and the Field Representative of the Commission to plan a campaign for the establishment of the library.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹Mary W. Harris, "The Louisiana Library Demonstration Plan" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library Extension Department, 1952), p. 47. (Typewritten.)

¹¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹¹Ibid.

A study of the parish, its background, population, educational level, assessed valuation, economic status, industries and occupations, was made as a background for the campaign for library establishment. The study revealed that:

The parish stretches from the Mississippi state line on the north to Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain on its southern border. Highway 51 and the Illinois Central railroad parallel the Tangipahoa river through the length of the parish, with all the larger towns located on this highway from Kentwood in the north to Ponchatoula thirty-three miles south. . . . With all towns located on this main highway, heavy traffic is a consequence. The parish is largely agricultural with dairying in the northern section, and strawberries and trucking crops in the south. Maps issued by the Highway Department call it The Strawberry Capital of America.¹¹²

In 1940 the population of the parish was 45,519 with one-third Negroes, and 1,236 foreign-born residents including about 1,000 Italians and a small settlement of Hungarians in the southern section of the parish.¹¹³

A Citizens' Library Movement was organized in Tangipahoa Parish to support the establishment of the library. The Hammond Round Table Club was a member of the state organization of the Citizens' Library Movement; and other organizations throughout the parish were asked to join the movement and endorse the establishment of the Tangipahoa Parish Library by

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 47-48.

¹¹³Elizabeth Cammack, "Tangipahoa Parish Library Demonstration, July 20, 1944-July 31, 1945" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1945), p. (1).

passing an appropriate resolution and mailing copies to the Police Jury of the parish and the Louisiana Library Commission. Participating groups were asked to appoint library representatives to form local committees to assist in the campaign by contacting members of the Police Jury. Individuals were asked to work in their own wards to further the library movement.¹¹⁴

Talks on the library were made by the Field Representative of the Commission to organizations in Hammond, Amite, Independence, Ponchatoula, and Kentwood, including, the Round Table Club, Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions', American Association of University Women, American Legion Auxiliary, Parent-Teacher Association, Philharmonic Society, American Legion, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Daughters of the American Revolution, the Music Club, and the Garden Club. Contacts were made with seventeen home demonstration clubs and fourteen community clubs.¹¹⁵

An all-day Folk School was held in Ponchatoula on October 2, 1943. The need for establishing a parish library was considered. The Folk School was directed by Mary Mims, the Rural Sociologist of Louisiana State University and a

¹¹⁴Harris, op. cit., pp. 48-49.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 49-50.

member of the Louisiana Library Commission. The Executive Secretary of the Library Commission, Essae M. Culver, discussed the value of the library in a program of community improvement. Mary Mims spoke in favor of the establishment of a library.¹¹⁶

The Police Jury of Tangipahoa Parish considered the matter of taking legal action to establish a parish library and providing local support of a library demonstration, at a meeting held in the courthouse in Amite on October 19, 1943. The meeting held elements of drama, since the leaders of the library movement were not assured that the Police Jury would take favorable action on the matter. Murphy Sylvest, formerly a member of the Louisiana Legislature who had worked for the establishment of the Library Commission, spoke of "his long desire that every Louisiana parish should have a library and emphasized its educational aspects and importance to a democracy."¹¹⁷ He presented the recreational, cultural, and economic values of a parish library and stressed the advantage to the parish of beginning the service with the economic and professional assistance of the Library Commission. The Field Representative of the Library Commission

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 49.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 51.

summarized the proposed plan for the Tangipahoa Parish Library Demonstration, stating that the Library Commission would provide the books for the library demonstration and a staff of trained librarians, and set up the demonstration in 1944; the towns would furnish quarters, utilities and furniture for the branches; and the Police Jury would furnish \$1,500 for overall operating expenses.¹¹⁸

In the deliberations of the Police Jury concerning the adoption of an ordinance to establish the library, "a motion for adoption was made only to be amended and action postponed."¹¹⁹ Further discussion and a motion to reconsider the proposition resulted in a tie vote, which was broken by the action of the President of the Police Jury who voted in favor of reconsidering the ordinance of library establishment. During the discussion which followed, the President of the Police Jury asked how many members of the Jury would personally favor a library tax and support the library. The Jury members expressed themselves unanimously as favoring the library personally. A formal ordinance of library establishment was then read and adopted by the Police Jury, and the President of the Jury appointed the Board of Control of the newly established library.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp. 50-51.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 51.

¹²⁰Ibid.

The Tangipahoa Parish Library Demonstration was opened on July 20, 1944, with a staff of three trained librarians, headed by Elizabeth Cammack. Distribution centers of the library were established at Amite, Hammond, Independence, Kentwood, and Ponchatoula; and smaller branches were opened later in Roseland, Robert, Husser, Loranger, Spring Creek, Chesbrough, and Tangipahoa.¹²¹

At various ceremonies in connection with the opening of the headquarters and the branches of the library, the value and significance of the library were emphasized by speakers including Superintendent of Schools, R. W. Russell; Mary Mims, of the Extension Department of Louisiana State University and a member of the Library Commission; Dr. George Bond of Southeastern Louisiana College; and Judge Frank Voelker, Chairman of the Library Commission.¹²²

In developing the library program, special emphasis was placed on reaching readers and satisfying the informational needs of patrons through business surveys, individual contacts, and programs at service clubs.¹²³

Numerous requests for information on a wide range of subjects were submitted to the library. Patrons received

¹²¹Cammack, op. cit., pp. 2-24.

¹²²Ibid., pp. 3-6.

¹²³Ibid., p. 5.

assistance from the library on such topics as livestock and feeding of stock, canning, preserving, pickling, refrigeration, radio, brick and concrete masonry, banking procedures and records, camellias and azaleas, soil maps and geology of the parish, barbecue pits, appraising property, electricity, home planning and decoration, landscape gardening, making outdoor furniture, music, vocations, and other topics of current interest.¹²⁴

As the library contacted organizations and individuals and issued information about the services of the institution, emphasis was placed on the local responsibility for voting a library tax to support the library after the one-year demonstration. The campaign for permanent support of the library began with the initial efforts of the Library Commission to secure the establishment of the parish library and was sustained through the period of the demonstration.¹²⁵

A mimeographed news leaflet on the library was mailed monthly to citizens throughout the parish, including police jurors, school board members, mayors and town councilmen, school principals, librarians, presidents of clubs and various prominent community leaders. Information was given

¹²⁴Ibid., pp. 5-8.

¹²⁵Ibid., pp. 8-11.

in the leaflet on the activities of the library, work of the branches, statistics of use, interesting requests, and explanations of the demonstration and the coming tax election.¹²⁶

News stories in five parish papers helped to keep the public informed and the library Board of Control was conscientious in interpreting the library to the citizens.¹²⁷

The Board of Control and the Staff of the Tangipahoa Parish Library were active and effective in making and executing the plans for the tax election. The Police Jury called the tax election without a dissenting vote, and the members in many instances worked for the passing of the tax.¹²⁸

On April 24, 1945, the voters of the parish proved that they wanted the demonstration library to become permanent when they voted overwhelmingly in favor of the one and three-fourths mills tax for four years to support the library. The results of the election were as follows: popular vote for the tax, 590; and against the tax, 70; property for the tax, \$1,084,182.66 and against the tax, \$114,674.00¹²⁹

The statistical record of the use of the Tangipahoa Parish Library Demonstration showed that during the year the library had registered 4,920 borrowers and circulated 79,367

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 9.

¹²⁷Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 11-14.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 14.

volumes, to a population of 45,519 (1940 Census).¹³⁰

The cost of the demonstration amounted to \$1,500.00 appropriated by the Police Jury of Tangipahoa Parish and \$43,339.11 expended by the Library Commission, exclusive of the salaries of the personnel of the Extension Department engaged in the technical processes, direction and supervision of the demonstration.¹³¹

Madison Parish Library Demonstration. The Madison Parish Library Demonstration was opened on February 16, 1945 for citizens to register as borrowers, examine the book collection, and meet the librarian, Marguerite B. Sprague, and the assistant librarian, Helen Y. Dew.¹³²

A formal ceremony initiating the demonstration library service on March 1, 1945, was arranged by the Board of Control, composed of R. N. Ware, chairman, H. C. Sevier, C. E. Hester, A. J. Boswell, and W. H. Hewes. A barbecue luncheon for the public was given after the program.¹³³

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 23.

¹³¹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstrations, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹³²Helen Dykes, "Madison Parish Library; Report of the Demonstration Year, 1945-1946" (Report to the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, 1946), p. (1).

¹³³Ibid.

The demonstration was developed in accordance with the established policies of the Louisiana Library Commission. The Commission provided the professional personnel and organized, directed, and supervised the activities and services of the library. The Extension Department of the Commission processed and cataloged 6,956 volumes for the Madison Parish Library Demonstration.¹³⁴

Distribution centers were established in Tallulah, the parish seat, and Stockland, Waverly, Mounds, Delta, and Warsaw for the white citizens, and one branch was established in Tallulah for the Negro patrons.¹³⁵

The services of the library were publicized through contacts and press releases. Talks were made to schools and organized groups, including the Waverly Community Club, the Thomastown Community Club, the Town and Country Club, the Garden Club, Rotary Club, Home Demonstration Club, Book Club, American Legion Auxiliary, and the public school faculty of Madison Parish.¹³⁶

The library arranged exhibits on peace, travel, social security, Book Week, religious art, and sponsored two publisher's exhibits of children's books. Appropriate book displays were arranged for the meetings of the Book Club in

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

Tallulah during the year.¹³⁷

As a special feature, the library cooperated with the Book Club of Tallulah in presenting a program by Harnett Kane, author of Louisiana Hayride, The Bayous of Louisiana, Deep Delta Country, and Plantation Parade.¹³⁸

During the period of the library demonstration, the Madison Parish Library registered 1,914 borrowers and circulated 34,262 volumes, and supplied information for patrons in response to 1,123 special requests for subject materials.¹³⁹

The local cost of the demonstration amounted to \$13,022.92 which included \$10,083.97 expended for building renovations in addition to the provision for furniture, equipment and other local expenses, while the Library Commission expended \$17,123.70 on the program, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department who processed the materials, and organized, directed, and supervised the library.¹⁴⁰

At the close of the one-year demonstration, the Board of Control of the Madison Parish Library secured the funds for the continuation of the library from the United Charities

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 2.

Committee of the parish.¹⁴¹

Acadia Parish Library Demonstration. The Acadia Parish Library Demonstration, which was opened on June 15, 1945, was organized by the Louisiana Library Commission to meet the reading needs and interests of 46,260 residents of the parish, many of whom were descendants of the Acadians who came from Canada to Louisiana and continued the customs and the use of the language of their French Canadian forebears.¹⁴²

In selecting books for the library, an emphasis was placed on juvenile titles which would interest young people and adults, since many adults in the community had limited reading skills. Some persons were unable to read or write, and many citizens did not speak English. The community leaders were eager to have books made available to the younger generation, realizing the importance of reading to the future success of the children.¹⁴³

An editorial which appeared in the Signal of Crowley

¹⁴¹Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 18. See also Appendix, Chart on Demonstrations, p. 457.

¹⁴²Virginia McDonald, "Acadia Parish Library Demonstration, 1945-1946" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, formerly the Louisiana Library Commission, 1946), pp. 1-3.

¹⁴³Ibid., p. 3.

the day before the opening of the library demonstration stated:

The importance of a parish library system cannot be over emphasized. It is one of the most far reaching and important movements that has taken place in Acadia parish for many years. An adequate library service such as is being rendered by the Louisiana State Library Commission to Acadia parish will influence the lives of the far greater portion of the population in a direct and specific manner. Not only will the library be of immediate benefit to the entire community, but the good it will do for the younger generation is far beyond the conception of the dollars and cents value.

The state is paying \$38,000 to establish the Acadia parish library project, or 95 per cent of the entire cost of the first demonstration year. After the first year the entire responsibility for the library will be turned over for local maintenance through a proposed tax election to take place within the next year.

Every citizen of Crowley and Rayne should turn out for the formal openings Friday to see what the new libraries have to offer. It is a civic duty as well as a personal obligation to see what the new library has to offer.¹⁴⁴

Twenty-nine organizations which had sponsored the library project were represented at the formal opening ceremonies which emphasized the importance of the library to the growth and progress of the community.¹⁴⁵

Distribution centers of the library were established and maintained, despite numerous changes in staff membership,

¹⁴⁴Editorial in the Signal (Crowley, Louisiana), June 14, 1945.

¹⁴⁵McDonald, op. cit., p. 1.

in Crowley, Rayne, Iota, Estherwood, Lyons Point, Bosco, Richard, and Evangeline Oil Field Branch, and service was provided for the schools. A branch for Negroes was established in Crowley and named in honor of a local Negro educator, the Ross Branch.¹⁴⁶

The clubs and organizations which had sponsored the library, including the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, the Chamber of Commerce, and the various women's clubs featured the library in their programs and encouraged the use of the library.¹⁴⁷

The library program was publicized through newspaper stories; programs for clubs; a book character contest for children during Book Week; and book reviews by Harnett Kane, Louisiana author of Plantation Parade and other works of local interest, in Crowley and Church Point.¹⁴⁸

The tax election to secure continued local support of the Acadia Parish Library after the library demonstration was called for February 11, 1946. The tax of one-half mill for two years passed by a popular vote of 462 votes for the tax and 207 votes against the tax. The property assessment voted for the library tax amounted to \$2,258,991.00

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 1-4.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

and the property assessment voted against the tax was \$924,556.00.¹⁴⁹

At the end of the library demonstration, 4,874 persons had registered as borrowers and the library had circulated 88,384 volumes.¹⁵⁰

The cost of the demonstration to Acadia parish was \$3,095.62. The Library Commission expended \$35,003.81 on the project, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the direction and supervision of the program and the processing of the collection.¹⁵¹

V. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Library Commission provided leadership for five professional conferences on library problems of interest to the parish librarians in the State in the years 1942-1945, and the Executive Secretary and the members of the staff gave instruction and guidance to students and visitors

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁵⁰Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 25.

¹⁵¹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

studying the demonstration method of library development.¹⁵²

Standards for administrative librarians in the parish libraries of Louisiana were maintained by the activities of the State Board of Library Examiners, appointed by the Library Commission.¹⁵³

Accounts of these activities are presented in the sections to follow.

Conferences

Five state-wide conferences of parish librarians were sponsored by the Extension Department of the Commission during the years 1942-1945 for the purpose of discussion and study of common problems of library service and administration; and eleven parishes held one-day follow-up conferences in the parish libraries on subjects of interest in improving local library services. A good representation of the parish library personnel and board members met with representatives

¹⁵²Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), pp. 12-13; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 17; and statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author, November 16, 1956.

¹⁵³Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 26-27.

of the Library Commission for the local conferences.¹⁵⁴

Educational Services to the Library Profession

Instruction on the Louisiana plan for library development was given annually to the students attending the Library School of Louisiana State University; and individual instruction was given to visitors who came to the Library Commission to study the State program.¹⁵⁵

Among the out-of-state visitors, who came to Louisiana to observe the demonstration libraries in action, were administrative librarians from Virginia, Michigan, Texas, and Kentucky. Information was given to foreign librarians from Canada, Europe, and South America.¹⁵⁶

Addresses on the services of the Louisiana Library Commission were presented to the Arkansas Library Association and on the programs of library institutes at the University of Illinois and the University of Chicago Personnel

¹⁵⁴Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), loc. cit.; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), loc. cit.

¹⁵⁵Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 12; and statement by Essae M. Culver, personal interview with the author, November 16, 1956.

¹⁵⁶Ibid.

Institute.¹⁵⁷

Board of Library Examiners

The Board of Library Examiners, appointed by the Library Commission, met in accordance with Act 36 of 1926 and Act 13 of 1942, and held examinations for the purpose of certifying administrative librarians for the parish libraries, thus maintaining standards for professional library personnel.¹⁵⁸

Ruth Baird, Webster Parish Librarian, was named to the Board of Library Examiners in July of 1943 to fill the unexpired term of John Hall Jacobs of the New Orleans Public Library, who resigned as a member of the Board when he entered the United States Navy. James McMillan of Louisiana State University, who resigned due to illness, was replaced on March 30, 1944 by Sallie J. Farrell, Librarian of the Calcasieu Parish Library. Debora R. Abramson and Ruth Baird were elected chairman and secretary of the Board respectively.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

¹⁵⁸Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 26-28.

¹⁵⁹Ibid., p. 26; and News item in the Minden (Louisiana) Herald. July 30, 1943.

VI. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The public relations program of the Library Commission and the Citizens' Library Movement were centered on the objective of improving and extending library services and libraries in Louisiana during 1942 to 1945.

The public relations policies of the Commission were reflected in the activities of the staff which were designed to inform the public of the services of the library, as well as through the use of publicity and promotional devices. Talks to organized groups, participation in club activities, special promotional activities, personal contacts, booklists, newspaper and magazine publicity were employed to bring to the people of Louisiana a greater awareness of the resources and services of the Commission.¹⁶⁰

Publicity

Articles publicizing the work of the Library Commission were prepared during the war years by a part-time publicity assistant and various members of the staff, with the Executive Secretary supervising the publicity program. When the part-time publicity assistant resigned in 1944, the

¹⁶⁰Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 11-13.

reference staff prepared feature articles for state and national journals, as well as issuing booklists, and arranging exhibits to emphasize the materials and services of the Commission; and the field assistant contributed press releases for the daily and weekly papers throughout the State.¹⁶¹ A handbook entitled, What, Where, Why of Louisiana Parish Libraries, was issued in 1945 to provide information on the Louisiana demonstration plan for library development.¹⁶²

The librarian in charge of the Negro Branch prepared publicity which was planned to inform the Negroes throughout the state of the services of the branch of the Library Commission located at Southern University. Efforts to reach the Negro population were made through weekly press releases and through contacts with Negro leaders engaged in educational and religious work.¹⁶³ The Commission experienced some difficulty in informing the general Negro population of the services offered by the Negro reference and loan library "due

¹⁶¹Ibid., pp. 13-15.

¹⁶²Louisiana Library Commission, What, Where, Why of Louisiana Parish Libraries (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Library Commission, 1945), 31 pp.

¹⁶³Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 13.

to the small per cent who read papers or who join organizations for cultural purposes."¹⁶⁴

Group Activities

During the years 1942-1945, the Executive Secretary and the staff members spoke on the programs of various organizations throughout the State to publicize the services and resources of the Commission and to extend the usage of the state and local library facilities.¹⁶⁵ The following organizations secured speakers from the Commission during the war years, and they were representative of the groups served by speakers from the Commission: P.T.A. Council of East Baton Rouge Parish; Conference of Supervisors, Department of Education; Louisiana Library Association; New Orleans District P.T.A.; Conference of Social Work--annual and district meetings; Baton Rouge Library Club; Dufrocq P.T.A.; Sulphur Rotary Club; De Quincy Rotary Club; Lake Charles Camp Fire Girls; Westlake Women's Society of Christian Service; Lions Club of Sulphur; Lake Charles A.A.U. W.; Sixth District Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs;

¹⁶⁴Ibid.

¹⁶⁵Tenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1942-1943 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1944), pp. 11-12; and Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), pp. 11-12.

Methodist Pastors' School; Hebron Church's 99th Anniversary; Sulphur American Legion Auxiliary; Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs; Winn Parish Community and Home Demonstration Clubs; Madison Parish Home Demonstration Council; Senior High School Girls of Baton Rouge; New Iberia Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions Clubs.¹⁶⁶

Author Evenings

As a special promotional activity, a series of book programs was arranged by the Library Commission. The series included lectures by such noted Louisiana writers as Lyle Saxon and Harnett Kane, and an out-of-state author and editor, Helen Ferris of the Junior Literary Guild. The series proved popular with patrons of the library at the headquarters of the Commission and in the demonstration libraries.¹⁶⁷

Citizens' Library Movement

The efforts of the Citizens' Library Movement to promote library development throughout the State were concentrated in 1942 on securing the appropriation needed for

¹⁶⁶Eleventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission: 1944-1945 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1946), p. 12.

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

the Library Commission.¹⁶⁸ When Governor Sam H. Jones announced that the State funds were so low that it would be necessary to veto the entire appropriation for the Library Commission, the members of the Citizens' Library Movement made such a forceful appeal in support of the appropriation, that it was not vetoed. This action was described as the "greatest single accomplishment of the state-wide organization."¹⁶⁹

The Movement suffered a set-back after the death of the Chairman, J. O. Modisette, in June of 1942. A new chairman for the Citizens' Library Movement was not named until September 17, 1944, when J. H. Mercer of Taylortown was elected at a meeting of the group in Shreveport.¹⁷⁰

At the 1944 meeting in Shreveport, the group selected four vice-chairmen in widely separated areas of the state as a means of spreading the leadership and keeping alive citizen interest in libraries throughout the State. The vice-chairmen were Mrs. Fenn Leaming of Mansfield, Dr. Harriet Daggett of Baton Rouge, Mrs. Martha Robinson of New Orleans, and

¹⁶⁸Essae M. Culver, and Nantelle M. Gittinger, "A History of the Citizens' Library Movement," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:22, Winter, 1944.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

John Caffery of Franklin. The other officers of the Movement included Mrs. W. B. Macmillan of Abbeville as secretary, C. Paul Phelps of Ponchatoula as treasurer, and Elizabeth Williams of Benton as executive secretary.¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹Ibid., pp. 22-23.

CHAPTER VI

LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION BECAME LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY: EXTENDED STATE-WIDE LIBRARY PROGRAM (1946-1950)

The period of 1946 through 1950 brought a change in the name of the state library agency from the Louisiana Library Commission to the Louisiana State Library.

The program of state-wide library development was advanced through demonstrations of library service in Lafayette, Washington, Livingston, Lafourche, Iberia, Beauregard, Evangeline, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Jefferson, and St. Tammany parishes, and the Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola, Louisiana. The reference and loan library for Negroes at Southern University was enlarged.

The State Library exercised leadership in the professional growth of librarians in service by arranging annual conferences to study problems of libraries and librarianship.

National attention was focused on the Louisiana plan of extending public libraries by the demonstration method,

when the State Librarian and the Field Representative of the State Library testified at Congressional hearings on Federal aid for libraries.

In 1950, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the inauguration of the state-wide library development program of the State Library, formerly the Louisiana Library Commission, was celebrated at a luncheon honoring the State Library which was sponsored by the Citizens' Library Movement and the Louisiana Library Association.

Accounts of the developments in the program of the State Library during the years 1946-1950 are elaborated in the following sections of this chapter.

I. LEGISLATURE CHANGED NAME OF LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION TO LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

The Louisiana Legislature of 1946 changed the name of the Louisiana Library Commission to the Louisiana State Library by Act Number 102 of 1946.¹ To clear the way for this action the Legislature also passed an act changing the name of the Law Library of the Supreme Court of Louisiana from Louisiana State Library to the Law Library of Louisiana.²

¹Act No. 102 of 1946. Louisiana Legislature. See Appendix for text of act, p. 449.

²Act No. 103 of 1946. Louisiana Legislature.

The changes in the names of the two agencies were made to give to each a name indicative of its correct functions, and to clarify the confusion which existed in the minds of many of the people of Louisiana concerning the services rendered by the two libraries.³

An editorial commenting on the change in the name of the Louisiana Library Commission, which appeared in the State Times of Baton Rouge stated:

In the sense that the whole state is served, Louisiana State Library seems a more fitting name for the Louisiana Library Commission, which has functioned for years among us.

By recent act of the legislature the new name was authorized. If a little time may be required to get used to it, the change seems desirable. Also, the name Louisiana State Library is shorter and streamlined, and the trend toward simplicity in words is pleasing. There is no change in aims and purposes and effective work, though there is of course a continuous broadening of activities.

Through the years the old library Commission has given a state-wide service. It has encouraged and materially assisted the setting up of parish unit libraries. It has carried on a book service by mail for sections without libraries. Many of our farm populace, and others in isolated communities, have come into a new world by reason of the books lent to them by the library Commission, which also has operated a book-mobile in various parts of the state. It has helped even the well established libraries by lending them special books or other material.

It is cited, too, that the library Commission has

³News item in the Times Picayune (New Orleans, Louisiana), July 28, 1946.

provided a reference service for state departments, and other official agencies. Though it has an excellent staff of trained executives and librarians, the members of the board serve entirely through courtesy and through their interest in the library work.

Under the slightly changed name, the Louisiana State Library faces a continuing task of great importance to our people. It has the well wishes of thousands of men, women and children who have enjoyed and profited from its services.⁴

II. ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

The Louisiana State Library, formerly the Louisiana Library Commission, continued the program of library service and development which had been initiated by the Library Commission, all the functions and authority of the Louisiana Library Commission having been transferred to the Louisiana State Library by Act No. 102 of 1946.⁵

The Louisiana State Library was charged by law, as follows:

. . . with the functions of organizing new libraries and improving those already established; of offering advice to all schools, state institutional and free public libraries and to all communities in the state which may propose to establish libraries; of obtaining reports from all free public libraries of Louisiana, and similar

⁴Editorial in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), July 27, 1946.

⁵Act No. 102 of 1946. Louisiana Legislature.

reports from other libraries; of organizing and maintaining for the use of the Legislature and State officials as well as the public a legislative reference service.⁶

The law which created the Louisiana State Library provided for a Board of Commissioners of five members, appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, for overlapping terms of one, two, three, four, and five years, with the successors to serve for a period of five years each. The act further stated:

That all members of the said Board of Commissioners shall be selected without political consideration from the entire State, and that at all times at least two members of the Board shall be women. . . .⁷

The professional administration of the State Library was continued by Essae M. Culver, formerly Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, who became known as the State Librarian with full responsibility as follows:

The chief administrative officer and director of library development in the State, with the obligation to plan and work toward a coordinated system of parish and regional libraries, so that every citizen and resident of the State shall have free library service of the highest quality consistent with modern methods and as may be justified by financial and economic conditions. The State Librarian must endeavor to coordinate and integrate the library service so as to afford the

⁶Debora R. Abramson, and others, "Organization and Functions of the State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:48, Spring, 1950.

⁷Act No. 102 of 1946. Louisiana Legislature.

schools, colleges, and universities the best free library service possible by means of inter-loan arrangements, book exchanges, etc.⁸

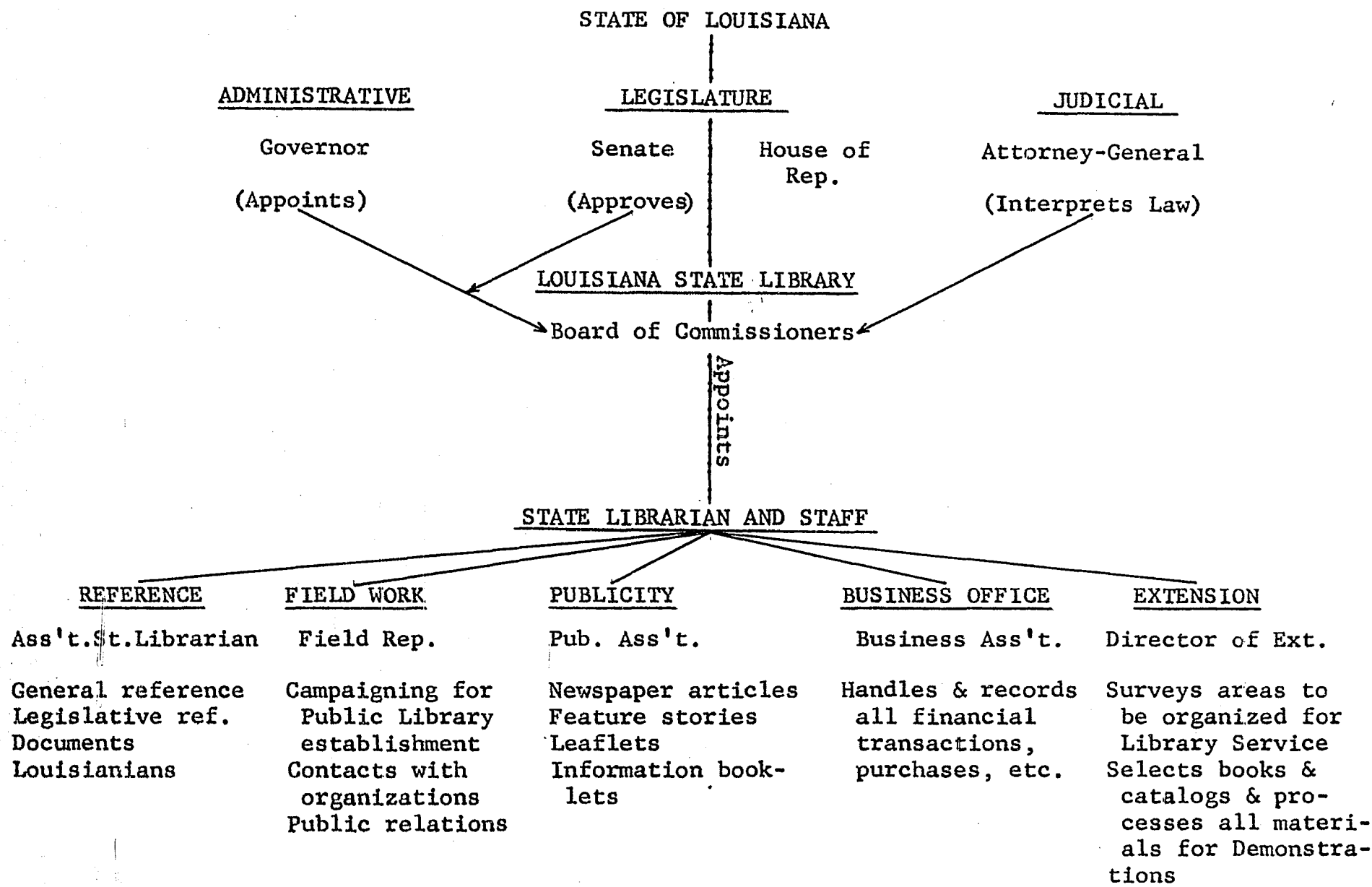
An organizational chart of the State Library, reproduced on the following page, was prepared to delineate the relationship of the State Library to the governing authorities of the State of Louisiana and to show the division of the work of the agency into five areas: Reference, Field Work, Publicity, Business Office, and Extension, with each area headed by a staff member responsible to the State Librarian.⁹

III. MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

In accordance with the action of the Louisiana Legislature, which transferred the functions of the Library Commission to the Louisiana State Library and required the appointment of the initial Board of Commissioners with overlapping terms, Governor James H. Davis reappointed the members of the board on October 23, 1946, as follows:
James T. Enloe of Mansfield, appointed for five years; C. A.

⁸Debra R. Abramson, and others, "Organization and Functions of the State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:48, Spring, 1950.

⁹Ibid., p. 49.



Ives of Baton Rouge, appointed for four years; Mary Mims of Minden, appointed for three years; and Lois J. Lester of Bains, appointed for two years.¹⁰

Frank Voelker of Lake Providence was serving as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Library Commission when the new law went into effect. In compliance with the law requiring the members of the Board of Commissioners to serve until their successors are commissioned and qualified, Voelker continued to serve as the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library until January 11, 1947, when Henry W. Bethard, Jr. of Coushatta, was named to the Board of Commissioners and was subsequently elected Chairman of the Board.¹¹

The State Librarian, Essae M. Culver, stated:

Judge Frank Voelker served as Chairman of the Board for four years and traveled thousands of miles attending State Board meetings, library openings, and in other services for promotion of library development. Such unselfish service deserves the sincere thanks of the people of the State who are benefiting by this service as well as the expressed appreciation of the State Library Staff and of the trustees and librarians of the libraries which have shared in the State Library services.¹²

¹⁰News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), October 23, 1946.

¹¹Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. (5).

¹²Ibid.

Henry W. Bethard, Jr. served as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners with Mary Mims, Lois J. Lester, James T. Enloe, and C. A. Ives as members of the Board until Bethard resigned in 1949 because of ill health.¹³

Governor Earl K. Long appointed as members of the Board of Commissioners Harriet S. Daggett of Baton Rouge to succeed Lois J. Lester, J. H. Henry of Melrose to replace C. A. Ives of Baton Rouge; and C. Paul Phelps to succeed Henry W. Berthard, Jr. Mary Mims and James T. Enloe remained on the Board.¹⁴

As individuals and as a group, the Board of Commissioners worked for library development in Louisiana. The activities of Harriet S. Daggett and Mary Mims in fostering the growth of public libraries have been recorded earlier in this study. References to additional contributions of these Commissioners will be found in subsequent sections of this work. The accounts of the various parish library demonstrations include evidence of the participation of the members of the Board of Commissioners. A tribute to the work of the Board which appeared in the report of the Louisiana State

¹³Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. (iv).

¹⁴News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), November 28, 1950.

Library commemorating the first twenty-five years of service of the agency stated:

The State Library has been unusually fortunate through the years in the high quality of citizenship represented by its Board members. All have served faithfully, coming from all parts of the state to attend meetings, often at the expense of their business or profession. They have contributed generously and served this state institution without any reward except their satisfaction in giving their services to an institution which they consider important to their State.¹⁵

IV. FINANCES

The financial support of the Louisiana State Library during the period of 1946-1950 was provided by legislative appropriations as follows:¹⁶

Funds available for the year ending June 30, 1946:
\$150,000.00.

Funds available for the year ending June 30, 1947:

¹⁵Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), loc. cit.

¹⁶Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), pp. 56, 58; and Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), pp. 35-36; and Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 40.

\$175,000.00.

Funds available for the year ending June 30, 1948:

\$175,000.00.

Funds available for the year ending June 30, 1949:

\$225,000.00.

Funds available for the year ending June 30, 1950:

\$225,000.00.

V. READERS' SERVICES

Services to the patrons of the Louisiana State Library were enlarged during the years 1946 through 1950, in spite of the handicap of lack of functional space in the Old Hill Memorial Library Building, by the expansion of the reference services, the enlarging of the collection of Louisiana archives, and the inauguration of a film service. Accounts of these services are presented in the sections to follow.

Reference and Circulation

The reference and circulation services of the Louisiana State Library were continued during 1946-1950, under the direction of Debora R. Abramson, Assistant State Librarian, according to the policies which had been established by the Library Commission. One of the main functions of the library was that of providing an information service for the citizens

of Louisiana. The State Library maintained the policy of mailing material directly to persons in parishes without established libraries or supplying information through inter-library loan to persons living in parishes where parish libraries were in operation.¹⁷

The Louisiana Library Commission, having limited funds in 1925 when the reference and circulation services were initiated, established a policy that only informational works would be made available through the mailing service of the Commission. Every effort was made to secure the information which patrons requested either by purchasing the material or securing the resources through inter-library loan.¹⁸

The Louisiana State Library acted as a clearing house of requests from individuals throughout the State. A plan of cooperation was worked out with the Louisiana State University to prevent unnecessary duplication of material by the libraries. Other libraries in the area, including the Howard-Tilton Memorial Library of Tulane University, participated in the cooperative service. Through cooperation, the libraries improved services and made more effective use of the resources

¹⁷Debora R. Abramson, "Reference Service," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:49, Spring, 1950.

¹⁸Ibid.

of each institution.¹⁹

The following table shows the growth and use of the book collection of the State Library, the special reference service requests, and the number of reading certificates issued yearly from 1946 through 1950.²⁰

Year	Total Book Collection	Total Circulation	Special Reference Requests	Reading Certificates
1946	240,130	587,812	41,911	395
1947	264,410	815,213	48,387	448
1948	294,051	823,282	47,558	457
1949	316,201	1,064,539	45,527	612
1950	330,895	1,018,838	46,355	771

Legislative Reference Service

In accordance with Act 102 of 1946, the Louisiana State Library continued to provide legislative reference service during the regular sessions of the Legislature in 1948 and 1950. The service was made more easily accessible to the legislators by operating a desk in the rotunda of the Capitol near the legislative chambers. A trained library

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 49-50.

²⁰Ibid., p. 49. Also see Appendix, Table I on the Growth and Use of the Book Collection and Reference Services of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 455.

assistant was assigned to take requests for information. Cooperative arrangements were made with the Louisiana State University Library and the Law Library of Louisiana State University to assist in handling the inquiries from the members of the Legislature.²¹

Although no special funds had been provided by the Legislature to develop the legislative reference service and the staff of the State Library was not increased, the Library Commission had provided reference services to governmental officials from the opening of the headquarters library in 1925, and the provision made for handling inquiries at the Capitol during the legislative sessions seemed to satisfy a real need.²²

Louisiana Collection

From the opening of the headquarters of the Library Commission in 1925, a collection of materials on Louisiana was maintained to provide information on the State and to facilitate research. The growing demand for sources of information on Louisiana brought a corresponding emphasis on

²¹Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 12.

²²Ibid.

the expansion of the collection by the Louisiana State Library.²³

The Louisiana Collection contained books by native and resident Louisiana authors and books about Louisiana by other authors, documents and publications issued by the various departments and agencies of the State, files of magazine and newspaper clippings, and rare ephemera of value to students of political and social history.²⁴

A collection of Louisiana archives was presented to the Louisiana State Library in May of 1947 by Lois Janvier Lester, a member of the Board of Commissioners. The items in the collection were from the personal library of George M. Lester, the late husband of the donor. The collection included books, pamphlets, plantation accounts, letters, and documents.²⁵

Film Service

A movie film service was inaugurated by the State

²³Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 12-13.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), May 5, 1947.

Library on August 1, 1949. The initial collection contained 30 films suitable for use in a 16mm sound projector. The films were made available free to public libraries, individuals, and organizations on the same basis as the books provided by the State Library. Films were loaned to patrons through local libraries in the State. In parishes without public libraries, films were sent directly to the individual.²⁶

Among the films included in the initial collection were the following: "The F.B.I.," "The Story of Our National Parks," "The New South," "Old and Modern New Orleans," "Music in America," "The Adventures of Bunny Rabbit," and "Here Comes the Circus."²⁷

Vivian Cazayoux, a graduate of the Library School of Louisiana State University, was placed in charge of the film service. The duties of the Film Librarian included the evaluation and purchasing of films and the maintaining of the special records related to the film service.²⁸

²⁶News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), July 22, 1949.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 10.

As the film service of the State Library was developed, the State Library recognized a need for cooperative planning among the various agencies of the State which maintained film collections. On October 25, 1949, the State Library called a conference of representatives of the agencies concerned to consider the compilation of a union catalog of 16mm films available in the State.²⁹

The following departments and agencies were invited to send representatives to the conference on a union film catalog: Orleans Parish School Board, Department of Audio-visual Aids; Louisiana State Hospital Board; Louisiana State Board of Health; Louisiana State Board of Public Welfare; Louisiana Forestry Commission; Agricultural Extension Service of Louisiana State University; Louisiana Department of Commerce and Industry; Louisiana State Department of Education; and Louisiana Department of Wild Life and Fisheries.³⁰

The group considered the advantages of having a union film catalog. In the deliberations of the conference, emphasis was placed on the value of having a central source of film information to expedite the service and to avoid unnecessary duplication of expensive material. As one outcome of the conference, the State Library was requested to make an

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 10-11.

application to the Louisiana Education Foundation or the Carnegie Corporation for the funds needed to finance the project.³¹

An application was made by the Louisiana State Library to the Carnegie Corporation for funds to prepare a union list of 16mm motion picture films, which were available for free loan in Louisiana. The Carnegie Corporation made a grant of \$5,000.00 in July of 1950 to finance the project.³²

Vivian Cazayoux, the film librarian of the Louisiana State Library, was released from some of her duties in the Film Department of the State Library to direct the project. The guide to free films was prepared and issued in 1951 under the title, Guide to Free Films; A Catalog of 16mm Motion Pictures Available for Free Loan in Louisiana.³³

The first full year of service of the Film Department of the Louisiana State Library, 1950, showed the following

³¹Ibid., p. 10.

³²Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 14.

³³Louisiana State Library, Guide to Free Films; A Catalog of 16mm Films Available for Free Loan in Louisiana (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library [1951]), 170 pp.

usage:³⁴

Requests for films received	848
Films circulated	657
Shipments	503
Number of times films shown	1,465
Total attendance	63,619

Comments from Borrowers

A sampling of the comments from patrons of the State Library which were written voluntarily during the period 1946-1950 included the following expressions:

I deeply appreciate your kindness and helpfulness that has made it possible for me to enjoy books that I thought I would never have a chance of reading. Again my thanks for your help and for the privilege of using the Louisiana State Library and thru it the Inter-Library facility.³⁵

You don't know how much we appreciate this library service. We can read books we couldn't buy.³⁶

I would like to express my appreciation for the splendid manner in which my request for certain books has been handled by your library. I had heretofore heard many complimentary statements concerning the efficiency of your office and hence its personnel. This

³⁴Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), loc. cit.

³⁵Letter from W. L. Pearman to the Louisiana State Library, January 14, 1948 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

³⁶Letter from Mrs. Glenn Carter to the Louisiana State Library, April 22, 1948 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

is the first time that I have made use of your facilities, and in view of the service I received, I am glad to add my commendation to theirs. Such service deserves acknowledgement.³⁷

Please accept my congratulations on the splendid and courteous service that you are giving throughout the state.³⁸

VI. FIELD SERVICES

The field services of the State Library were expanded during the years 1946 through 1950 in response to the increased demand for information and assistance in promoting the establishment of parish libraries. In meeting the need for more field services, the position of Field Representative was established in the Administrative Department of the State Library. On September 3, 1946, Sallie J. Farrell, who had served as a field worker with the Library Commission in 1941 and who had experience in directing demonstration library programs, was named to the position of Field Representative.³⁹

³⁷Letter from Horace C. Robinson to the Louisiana State Library, March 2, 1948 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

³⁸Letter from Mrs. J. A. Kitchen to the Louisiana State Library, June 10, 1949 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

³⁹Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), pp. 11, 48.

Sallie J. Farrell met with officials, groups, and interested citizens throughout the State and discussed the demonstration method of library development of the State Library. Detailed information was provided on the legal requirements for establishing a parish library, the one-year demonstration plan of the State Library, the local costs of a library demonstration, and the contributions and services of the State Library to the development of the parish library.⁴⁰

The Field Representative of the State Library recognized a quickening interest in public library development and indicated that the people of Louisiana were taking the lead in securing the establishment of parish libraries.⁴¹

During the period 1946-1950, the governing bodies of Avoyelles, Catahoula, Jefferson, Franklin, St. Tammany, St. Charles, Caldwell, St. Mary, and East Carroll parishes passed ordinances of library establishment. Each parish was placed in turn on the list of parishes waiting to have a library demonstration conducted by the State Library.⁴²

The Field Representative worked closely with local

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 13.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.; and Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 11.

library boards, the governing authorities, interested citizens and the personnel of the demonstration libraries which were conducted in Washington, Lafayette, Livingston, Lafourche, Iberia, Beauregard, Evangeline, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Jefferson, and St. Tammany parishes and the Louisiana State Penitentiary.⁴³

VII. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The public relations program of the State Library during the years 1946 through 1950 continued to emphasize personalized service for the borrower and promotional activities which would strengthen existing libraries and lead to the establishment of additional parish library facilities. In describing the public relations program, Sallie J. Farrell, the Field Representative, stated:

The public relations program of the State Library is not a program that is set up as a separate thing apart from its services, but is an integral part of the whole state-wide system of establishing and developing libraries, of maintaining a centralized information and book service, and of promoting reading in Louisiana.⁴⁴

⁴³Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 14.

⁴⁴Sallie J. Farrell, "The Louisiana State Library and Public Relations," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 10:96, March, 1947.

The publicity program and the reading services were integrated, to enrich the lives of individuals and to improve the cultural and economic conditions of the State through wider and more effective use of books and related informational sources. The State Library kept a file of state-wide organizations, with the names of the officers and the scheduled dates of meetings of the groups. Booklists and exhibits were prepared as requested by individuals and organizations. Assistance was offered in the preparation of club programs. Speakers were provided as requested. Press releases on the services and special activities of the library were prepared for newspapers, which were circulated in local communities and throughout the State.⁴⁵

The Reading Certificate Project of the State Library, which provided for the granting of a certificate of recognition to patrons who had read twelve books on various subjects during a given year, was initiated in 1932 and continued each year to broaden the reading interests of Louisiana citizens.⁴⁶

The public relations activities of the demonstration libraries were identified with every phase of community life.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 90-96.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 92.

The librarians used every possible method of enlightenment and of interpretation, including: newspaper stories, exhibits, booklists, slides in theaters, signs on buses, outdoor advertising, displays in store windows, forums, film showings, discussion groups, direct mailing services to individuals and organizations, and personal services and contacts.⁴⁷

The Citizens' Library Movement, which numbered 350,000 members, was considered one of the strongest links in the state-wide chain of public relations. The Movement brought together citizens, from various sections of the State, interested in improving existing libraries and promoting the establishment of libraries in every parish so that books would be brought within reach of all.⁴⁸

VIII. LOUISIANA DEMONSTRATION METHOD OF LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT GAINED RECOGNITION

The Louisiana plan for extending public library service, by the demonstration method, gained wider recognition during the years 1946-1950. The program of the Louisiana State Library was studied by visitors and members of the profession from different sections of the United

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 94.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 92.

States and several foreign countries; and the demonstration plan of the Louisiana State Library was given national recognition in testimony at Congressional hearings on the Public Library Service Demonstration Bill in May and December of 1947. Accounts of these activities are presented in the sections to follow.

Visitors Studied the Louisiana State Library Program of Library Development

The Louisiana State Library provided individualized instruction for members of the library profession and students who visited the State Library, upon the recommendation of the State Department of the United States, the Library of Congress, and the American Library Association, during the years 1946-1950. The staff of the State Library gave information and orientation on the library demonstration program to visitors who came independently or by arrangement with their respective governments from British Columbia, France, New South Wales, Holland, Germany, Poland, Africa, Asia, and the Phillipines.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 12; and Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 8. Also see Appendix, Partial List of Visitors to the Louisiana State Library, p. 458.

An editorial in the State-Times of Baton Rouge commented on the foreign visitors to the State Library as follows:

Visits here of librarians from other countries, to observe the program being carried out in this state, is reminder to ourselves of the excellent service provided by the Louisiana library commission and the various parish libraries that have come into being. A guest here earlier in the week was a librarian from British Columbia. A French librarian was expected here for the latter part of the week, and another from France is due to arrive later in the summer, their tours to the U.S.A. sponsored by the French ministry of foreign affairs.

Louisiana was extremely fortunate in being selected some years ago as a state for demonstration library work, and it brought to us a new vision of library possibilities. Through the functioning of the Louisiana library commission, the work has been developed and broadened to the extent of appropriations made available for the purpose.

.....
 With the use of such funds as were made available to it, the commission has carried on a vastly important program and it is continuing its services over the state. During the past score of years, Louisiana has become far more library minded, and now in these postwar years the results of the commission's work and encouragement are counting for a great deal. We are pleased to have visitors from afar observe the program here.⁵⁰

The Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library commented on the visit of two French librarians, as follows:

⁵⁰Editorial in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), July 19, 1946.

Some recognition has come from abroad to Louisiana because of the many successful parishwide demonstrations of library service. Among the visitors who came from other countries to the United States, to study methods of library development and were referred to Louisiana's system by the American Library Association, were two delightful librarians sent to this country by the French Government. Miss Francois Gaston-Cherau was a staff member of the Bibliotheque Nationale, one of the largest libraries in the world, and Miss Paule Nancel-Penard was the librarian of the Public Library at Le Havre, France. Both librarians visited headquarters and demonstrations in several different parishes.⁵¹

The State Librarian and Field Representative Testified at Congressional Hearings on Federal Aid to Libraries

Essae M. Culver, State Librarian, and Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative of the Louisiana State Library, were asked to testify in Washington, D. C. in 1946 and 1947 at the Congressional hearings on the "Public Library Service Demonstration Bill."⁵²

The bill under consideration provided for extending public library service in the United States with the aid of Federal funds by the demonstration method, which Louisiana

⁵¹Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 12.

⁵²Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 16.

had used from the initial stages of the program of the Louisiana Library Commission. When asked to discuss the methods used by the Louisiana State Library at a special Congressional hearing on May 16, 1947, Sallie J. Farrell stated:

I have been asked to meet with your committee, I am sure, because Louisiana has found successful and effective the same library demonstration plan that Senate Bill 48 would make possible all over the United States.

.
The library demonstration plan in Louisiana is exactly what the name implies. The State Library works on the theory that if adequate efficient library service is demonstrated to the people of a parish for a year's time, the people will be so sold on the idea of service and so aware of its values and benefits that they will see fit to support it locally.

During the demonstration year, the State Library furnishes a trained, professional staff, a book collection, magazines, administrative supplies, and a bookmobile, when obtainable.

The governing body of the parish and local communities provide quarters for the branch libraries, provide utilities, furniture, equipment, and the salaries of the part-time custodians. From the very beginning, the parish feels it has a definite part in the set up and feels it is their library.

.
The library demonstration is a sound business investment for the Louisiana parish and for the State. Although the State Library does withdraw its financial aid at the end of the demonstration year when the library becomes locally supported, it leaves intact the book collection and the bookmobile which have been used during the demonstration.⁵³

⁵³Sallie J. Farrell, "Demonstration Libraries in Louisiana," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 11:11-12, November, 1947.

IX. EXTENSION DEPARTMENT

During the years 1946 through 1950, the Extension Department of the State Library, under the direction of Mary W. Harris, gave professional assistance to established libraries in the State, upon request of the agencies, in connection with various problems and library procedures, including: building plans, reorganization of routines and patterns of service, in-service training, personnel, and public relations. Visits were made by the staff of the Extension Department to libraries needing advisory service or special directions in improving or strengthening existing programs.⁵⁴

The Extension Department maintained two operational manuals, entitled, "Manual of Instruction for Administrative Librarians of Parish Systems" and "Manual of Instruction for Branch Assistants of Parish Systems," to provide uniformity and efficiency in the handling of the policies and routines of the demonstration libraries. The Extension Department stated that "demonstration libraries operate by these procedures, and most practices are continued after the parish

⁵⁴Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 11-12.

library becomes locally controlled."⁵⁵

Kathryn Adams, a professionally trained librarian with experience in the administration of the Rapides Parish Library, joined the staff of the Extension Department on April 3, 1950 "as a part-time field representative and first assistant in the Department, in charge of personnel and work processes."⁵⁶

During the period of 1946-1950, the Extension Department organized, directed, and supervised demonstration libraries in Lafayette, Washington, Livingston, Lafourche, Iberia, Beauregard, Evangeline, Avoyelles, Catahoula, Jefferson, and St. Tammany parishes, and the Louisiana State Penitentiary. The Extension Department also supervised the work of the reference and loan library for Negroes located at Southern University. Accounts of the demonstration libraries and the state-wide service to Negroes are presented in the sections to follow.

Washington Parish Library Demonstration

The Washington Parish Library Demonstration, which

⁵⁵Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 23.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 26.

was conducted by the State Library from April 27, 1946 through April 30, 1947, was an outgrowth of the civic activities of the Waverly Club of Franklinton and the Bogalusa Civil League. These organizations assumed the responsibility for developing a general public awareness of the value of a parish library which led to the establishment of the Washington Parish Library on November 14, 1945, by action of the Police Jury.⁵⁷

The State Library provided the professional leadership in securing the legal establishment of the parish library and in making the necessary arrangements for a demonstration of library service in the parish. Plans were made for the demonstration by the Extension Department, in accordance with the established policies of the State Library. The professional personnel and the materials were provided by the state agency. Since no bookmobile could be procured, a state car was loaned to the parish library for local supervision and branch library visiting.⁵⁸

The headquarters of the library was located in a community center in Franklinton, which was owned and made

⁵⁷Helen Dykes, "Washington Parish Library Demonstration, 1946-1947" (Report to the Louisiana State Library Baton Rouge, 1947), p. (1).

⁵⁸Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 25.

available to the parish library by the Waverly Club. The Bogalusa Branch was located in a municipal building. Thirteen branches were opened throughout the parish, including a branch to serve Negroes located in Franklinton and another branch to serve Negro patrons in Bogalusa.⁵⁹

The public relations activities of the library included: talks to business groups, women's study clubs, church groups, community organizations, school children, and parent-teacher groups; exhibits in the library and in window space provided by local merchants; and special promotional services in connection with Book Week, the parish fair, and the Farm and Home Labor Show.⁶⁰

At an educational workshop conducted by the parish school authorities, the Washington Parish Library Demonstration was asked to exhibit elementary science materials on various levels. The parish librarian assisted the Supervisor of School Libraries of the Department of Education in the presentation and discussion of the materials.⁶¹

The Washington Parish Library Demonstration circulated 73,506 volumes to 4,621 registered borrowers. Informational sources were secured in response to 2,877 requests from

⁵⁹Dykes, op. cit., pp. (1)-2.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. (1).

⁶¹Ibid.

patrons. These requests for reference assistance were satisfied by local reference service or the inter-library loan service of the State Library.⁶²

The tax election to secure local support for the library, following the one-year demonstration of library service by the State Library, was scheduled on February 25, 1947. The Waverly Club and the Bogalusa Civil League worked to secure the passage of the library tax of 1 and 1/2 mills for five years. Contacts were made with the taxpayers. Resolutions of endorsement of the library service were adopted by twelve organized groups in the parish. Civic groups and the local merchants furnished the funds to pay for advertising in the Bogalusa and Franklinton papers.⁶³

The results of the tax election proved the general endorsement of the parish library. There were 569 popular votes, representing \$998,712.00 in property assessments, voted for the library tax; and there were 151 popular votes, representing \$200,040.00 in property assessments, voted against the library tax. Thus, the people insured the continuation of the Washington Parish Library as a locally supported institution.⁶⁴

⁶²Ibid., p. 2.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

The local cost of the demonstration amounted to \$2,515.00; and \$27,099.95 was spent on the program by the State Library, exclusive of the expenses of the Extension Department in processing the collection and supervising the project.⁶⁵

Lafayette Parish Library Demonstration

The opening of the Lafayette Parish Library Demonstration on August 6, 1946 was an achievement in community development which came as a result of twenty years of promotional activity by the Rotary Club and the Vingt-Quatre Club of Lafayette and their leaders. The commendable work of the clubs and the community leaders was stressed in the speeches made by T. M. Callahan, editor of the Lafayette Daily Advertiser, and Essae M. Culver, State Librarian, at the opening ceremonies.⁶⁶

The Rotary Club contributed to the campaign for making the demonstration possible, by providing \$2,500.00 of the fund needed for the local support of the project and by

⁶⁵See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on the financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

⁶⁶Lucille Arceneaux, "Lafayette Parish Library Demonstration, 1946-1947" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1948), p. (1).

working enthusiastically to arouse general interest in the parish library program.⁶⁷

The Vingt-Quatre Club, which sponsored a small library in Lafayette, gave leadership to the parish library movement. And Ruth Wilbanks, the librarian of the city library and a member of the Vingt-Quatre Club, took a prominent part in the campaign to secure the establishment of a parish library.⁶⁸

The demonstration library was conducted in accordance with the established policies of the State Library, with the Extension Department in charge of the organization, direction, and supervision of the program.⁶⁹

The local funds supplied for the library demonstration by the Rotary Club were supplemented by \$750.00 provided by the parish school authorities and \$750.00 appropriated by the Police Jury. The allocation of the school funds required that a contract for library service to schools be executed by the officials of the parish library, the State Library, and the school authorities.⁷⁰

The Lafayette Parish Library replaced the Lafayette

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., pp. (1)-2.

⁷⁰Ibid.

Municipal Library. In reevaluating the city book collection, approximately 3,000 volumes, which were considered worthy of inclusion in the resources of the parish collection, were processed for use in the Lafayette Branch and the Boys and Girls Branch of the parish demonstration.⁷¹

Distribution centers of the parish library were located in various communities in quarters which were easily accessible to the patrons of the library. The locations of the branches were publicized in the weekly paper, The Lafayette Progress. The branch library in Scott was housed in the Community Center. Duson and Broussard branches were in the town halls of the communities. Youngsville branch was in the drug-store. Ridge and Judice branches were located in schools. The Carencro branch was located in a private home. The Lafayette branch and the Boys and Girls Library were located in public buildings.⁷² The Butler Memorial Branch for the Negroes was located in Lafayette one block from the office of a Negro physician.⁷³

Emphasis was placed on publicizing the library, the services, the resources, and special activities, from the time the Police Jury made the final arrangements with the State Library to initiate the Lafayette Parish Library Demonstration.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 2.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., p. 5.

Newspaper articles featured annotated lists of books in the library, talks by the librarian, stories of reader interests, and accounts of the progress of the library, with statistical information from the monthly reports of the librarian. Additional publicity was given to the services of the library through talks by the librarian before both school and club groups, displays in local store windows, at the Farm and Home Labor Saving Show, and through radio and spot announcements, mimeographed monthly newsletters, a brochure to clubs advertising the service, and printed booklists.⁷⁴

The services and activities of the Boys and Girls Library in Lafayette proved popular with the youth who enjoyed having their own special library. The branch was a unique institution among Louisiana parish libraries, being the only parish library branch designed to serve children exclusively. The Boys and Girls Library was housed in a building entirely separate from the branch which served adults. A regular feature of the library program for the children was a weekly story hour, with a varied slate of story-tellers, including students from the Speech Department of Southwestern Louisiana Institute, volunteers from the community, and

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 2.

rotating members of the staff of the library.⁷⁵

The reference and inter-library loan requests of the Lafayette Parish Library Demonstration included a variety of subjects, with an emphasis on materials of interest to business and professional men. The library supplied information to borrowers engaged in a wide range of occupations including: a lawyer, photographer, optician, nurseryman, book salesman, automobile dealer, window decorator, sheet metal worker, educator, writer, and accountant. Borrowers requested information on hobby interests including: stenciling, linoleum block-printing, collecting of antiques, identification of china, basketmaking, silk screen printing, mask-making, pottery, astronomy, mental telepathy, and analyzing handwriting.⁷⁶

During the period of the library demonstration, from August 6, 1947 through August 31, 1948, 81,745 volumes were circulated to 4,745 registered borrowers.⁷⁷

The continuation of the library following the demonstration was assured by the action of the voters on May 20, 1947, when a library tax of two mills to run for ten years

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 3-4.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 3.

was passed. The election results revealed that 557 popular votes, representing \$1,772,158.50 in assessed property valuation, were cast for the library tax; and 61 popular votes, representing \$111,190.00 in property valuation, were voted against the tax.⁷⁸

The local cost of the demonstration amounted to \$4,000.00 while the State Library expended \$30,524.79 on the project, exclusive of the expenses of the Extension Department in the supervision of the demonstration and processing the collection.⁷⁹

Livingston Parish Library Demonstration

Extensive background work by local citizens and representatives of the Louisiana State Library influenced the general public and the Police Jury of Livingston Parish to support the establishment of a parish library. At the regular meeting of the Police Jury on June 13, 1945, the Livingston Parish Library was established by unanimous action of the

⁷⁸Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 26.

⁷⁹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

governing authority.⁸⁰

The Livingston Parish Police Jury appropriated \$1,500.00 for the local support of the library. The Police Jury then requested that the State Library conduct a one-year demonstration of library service.⁸¹

Arrangements were made for the demonstration by the Extension Department of the State Library. A staff was employed and 6,000 volumes were selected and processed to form the initial collection. When some difficulty was encountered in locating a suitable place for the headquarters and Livingston Branch of the library, the Police Jury arranged for the library to occupy quarters which had been used by the members of the Police Jury.⁸²

The Livingston Parish Library Demonstration was opened formally on December 16, 1946, with a program held in the courtroom of the Livingston Parish Court House.⁸³

The new parish service was welcomed into Livingston by local leaders, influential in bringing about the establishment of the library, by staff members of the Louisiana State Library, under whose direction the library operated for its first 'trial' year, and out-of-

⁸⁰Annie S. Cowart, "History of the Livingston Parish Library Demonstration" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, December 31, 1947), p. (1).

⁸¹Ibid., p. 2. ⁸²Ibid. ⁸³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

parish persons interested in library development. All speakers expressed pride in the new library, and confidence that it would be so welcomed by Livingston citizens that its continuation was assured.⁸⁴

In addition to the headquarters and branch library service established in Livingston, the parish seat, branches of the library were located in Watson, Albany, Denham Springs, French Settlement, Maurepas, Whitehall, Walker, Holden, and Springfield; and four bookmobile routes were developed to reach readers in sections of the parish which were not served by the community branches.⁸⁵

The bookmobile was well received in the parish, where the routes were planned to make the books easily available to the rural residents. The librarian commented on the service as follows:

The work on the bookmobile is quite rewarding. You come in contact with so many people and so many different kinds of people; some 'poor' and others just plain, good, country people; some friendly and others not as much so. Children and adults alike are anxiously waiting every two weeks when the route is made--even small, preschool age children get a thrill out of meeting the bookmobile and asking for the books they want. There are regular coffee stops, served by our patrons, at 'ten and two.'⁸⁶

In promoting the use of the library, displays, exhibits, booklists, and special publicity activities were developed in the branches and other centers in the community.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 3.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 14.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 9.

Story hours were presented in Livingston and Denham Springs. Exhibits of vocational materials were prepared for the seniors in the high schools. Folders on the services of the library and a booklist of distinguished books for boys and girls were distributed. A Vacation Reading Club attracted interest throughout the parish, and one hundred and sixteen children completed a summer reading course.⁸⁷

Evidence of effective school and library cooperation was shown in the exhibit on the library which the Doyle School planned and arranged for the county fair. The exhibit featured a book house, surrounded by characters from various children's stories, with book jackets and posters as a background, and at the base of the display were arranged a number of book reviews which had been written by the students.⁸⁸

From the opening of the Livingston Parish Library, emphasis was placed on the responsibility of the local citizens to provide support for the library after the period of the one-year library demonstration which was conducted by the Louisiana State Library. In June of 1947, the field representative of the State Library and the Board of Control of the Livingston Parish Library formulated plans to launch a tax campaign.⁸⁹

⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 7-9.

⁸⁸Ibid., pp. 8-9.

⁸⁹Ibid., p. 9.

The Board of Control of the library agreed to request that the Police Jury call a tax election to vote a three mill tax on all assessed property for a period of five years, to provide support for the Livingston Parish Library.⁹⁰

When the matter of the tax election was presented to the Police Jury on June 28, 1947, the Police Jury moved to postpone calling the election for another month. Following the meeting, the members of the Library Board, the librarian and the assistants, and various citizens interested in the library made many personal contacts with individuals and groups throughout the parish concerning the election. Statements requesting the Police Jury to grant the request of the Library Board to call a special tax election were made by various organizations in the parish. The tax election was called for September 30, 1947. The election commissioners served on a voluntary basis without pay, since the Police Jury made no provision to pay for the work. Contacts were made with the voters through newspaper stories, circulars, and letters to parents. Book-marks were placed in all books circulated informing the public of the services of the library.⁹¹

When election day arrived, the people expressed their

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 9-10.

⁹¹Ibid., p. 10.

desire to have the parish library continue in a vote which the librarian considered "larger than the usual tax election vote . . . an overwhelming majority supported the issue."⁹²

The official tabulation on the tax election showed that the vote on the library tax was: popular vote for the tax 435, against the tax 59. The property assessment vote for the tax was \$544,153.00 and against the tax totaled \$42,035.00.⁹³

The Livingston Parish Library Demonstration circulated 59,913 volumes to 3,302 registered borrowers from a book collection of 8,028.⁹⁴

The Extension Department of the State Library commented on the demonstration in Livingston Parish as follows:

The parish was a virgin field for library service as no public library had previously been established within its borders. Circulation per capita was 3.3; circulation per registered user 14.9; per cent of population registered 18.5. The bookmobile, a converted station-wagon, traveled 8,063 miles in 8 months; (on regular routes 2,885 miles and 5,178 in visiting branches and other travel).⁹⁵

The Livingston Parish Library Demonstration was

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 27.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 26.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 27.

conducted at a cost of \$1,500.00 to the local authorities and \$21,585.91 to the State Library, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the project.⁹⁶

Louisiana State Penitentiary Library Demonstration

The Louisiana State Library conducted a one-year demonstration of library service at the Louisiana State Penitentiary from January 23, 1947 through January 31, 1948. The library demonstration was established under the direction and supervision of the Extension Department of the State Library, after prison officials had made several unsuccessful attempts to provide some library facilities in the penal institution located at Angola, Louisiana.⁹⁷

Marvin Tanner, a graduate of the Library School of Louisiana State University, was employed by the State Library to head the library demonstration at the penitentiary. The organization of the service was patterned after the plan of organization of a parish library, with a central library and seven branches located in the various farm camps of the

⁹⁶See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

⁹⁷Marvin Tanner, "Demonstration Library, Louisiana State Penitentiary, Angola, Louisiana, 1947" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, February, 1948), p. (1).

institution. The library was planned to serve both the inmates of the institution and the free personnel.⁹⁸

Special attention was given in the selection of the book collection to the wide range of reading interests and the educational levels of the inmates and the employees of the institution, the previous occupations of the prisoners, the work of the inmates and the employees, and the recommendations of the American Prison Association related to libraries in penal institutions.⁹⁹

During the library demonstration 2,261 volumes were provided in the collection, and the library subscribed to thirty-six magazines. The magazines were routed through the various camps using a rotation system which assured each camp the use of every magazine on the subscription list. The book collection contained 49 per cent non-fiction titles, 36 per cent fiction. Fifteen per cent of the books were selected for persons with limited education and reading skills. Murder mysteries and detective stories were excluded from the collection.¹⁰⁰

Inmates of the prison were placed in charge of the branches of the prison library. The assistants were selected

⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 1-3. ⁹⁹Ibid., p. 2. ¹⁰⁰Ibid.

on the basis of interest, education, ability, and their institutional record. The librarian reported that the prisoners selected as assistants accepted readily the responsibilities delegated to them and took pride in doing their work well. A manual of instructions was used, and the training and supervision of the work was handled by the professional librarian.¹⁰¹

In studying reader interests and planning for the distribution of books in the various camps, reading records of the borrowers were kept. It was found that the Negro prisoners read more non-fiction than fiction, and they requested books on religion, philosophy, social studies, useful arts, trades, sports, literature, and travel.¹⁰²

The women prisoners, about eighty per cent of whom were Negroes, read more fiction than non-fiction. They held meetings to review books and talk about the books which they read.¹⁰³

During the period of the demonstration, 28,399 books and magazines were circulated. The library provided information in response to 430 special requests on a variety of subjects including: tax accounting, air conditioning,

¹⁰¹Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 2.

art, sculpture, sign painting, sketching, painting, boats, boat building, navigation, sugar chemistry, educational opportunities under the G.I. Bill, furniture making, wood carving, jewelry making, the Koran, Huey Long, Bible, barbering, paratroopers, harmony, plastics, short story writing, foreign languages, surveying, tap dancing, watch repairing, and pest control.¹⁰⁴

The demonstration library was used for recreational and general reading, and to assist inmates in making personal adjustments and some vocational preparation for returning to a free society. Following the library demonstration, some book service was available to the inmates, but the services described above were discontinued at the closing of the demonstration on January 31, 1948.¹⁰⁵

Lafourche Parish Library Demonstration

The Lafourche Parish Library Demonstration brought books to a thickly settled agricultural parish in southern Louisiana. The parish library program was organized to meet the reading needs and interests of the 38,615 inhabitants of

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 2-3.

¹⁰⁵Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 28.

the parish, many of whom were descendants of the Acadian settlers and maintained the customs, traditions, and the language of their French ancestors.¹⁰⁶

The County Agent, the Home Demonstration Agent, the schools, and the community leaders worked together for general community betterment; and the people of the parish recognized the value of having a parish library to contribute to the awakening and developing community.¹⁰⁷

Interest in securing a parish library existed for a number of years before legal action was taken by the Police Jury in June of 1945, when an ordinance establishing the Lafourche Parish Library was passed by the governing body. Following the legal establishment of the parish library, arrangements were made for the State Library to conduct a one-year demonstration of library service in Lafourche Parish.¹⁰⁸

A field representative of the State Library worked with the Police Jury and interested citizens in June of 1946 to make plans for the library demonstration.¹⁰⁹

The Woman's Club of Thibodaux and the St. Mary Pamela

¹⁰⁶Kay Werner, "Lafourche Parish Library Demonstration, May 13, 1947-May 31, 1947" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1949), p. (1).

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 3.

Society of Raceland had provided collections of books for their respective communities, but neither community had a trained librarian; and after the plans were made for the demonstration of parish-wide library service by the State Library, the books owned by the Woman's Club of Thibodaux and the St. Mary Pamela Society were turned over to the Parish Library.¹¹⁰

When the parish library was opened formally on May 13, 1947, there were numerous congratulatory speeches, and pledges to do all that could be done for the parish library were given by members of the Police Jury, heads of organizations throughout the parish, parish officials and community leaders.¹¹¹

Library service was made available through distribution centers in Thibodaux, where the headquarters library was located; and in branches in Raceland, Lockport, Larose, Cut Off, Golden Meadow; the Carver Branch for Negroes; and the bookmobile.¹¹²

The people of Lafourche Parish showed enthusiasm for the library from the time of the opening. During the first

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 2.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹¹²Ibid., pp. 4-10.

three months of the demonstration 1,796 citizens had registered and borrowed 22,951 books and magazines.¹¹³

Efforts were made to keep the public informed about the activities, services, and the progress of the library through newspaper releases, radio announcements, news notes prepared by the library, talks to various groups in the community, and exhibits in the library. A number of posters were made for displays in the library by high school students who were interested in the library and in art. An especially successful activity of the students was a series of posters which publicized the magazines that were available for circulation in the library. The number of magazines circulated by the library increased from 29 magazines a month to 600 following the publicity given to this service. A list of "Books for the Business Man" was featured in the Chamber of Commerce Bulletin, and the library received numerous requests for the recommended books from patrons throughout the parish.¹¹⁴

The bookmobile was effective in reaching readers in Lafourche Parish, where the parish is bisected by Bayou Lafourche, with families living on the bayou and on the paved highway which runs the length of the parish to Grand Island.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 10.

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 10-12.

At the end of the library demonstration, the bookmobile had 692 registered borrowers. The 692 borrowers had checked out 10,073 books and magazines from the bookmobile.¹¹⁵

The Lafourche Parish Library Demonstration registered 4,007 borrowers during the period of the library demonstration and circulated 84,832 volumes.¹¹⁶

Service to the public was emphasized during the library demonstration. When a special program of publicity was initiated to inform the public of the tax election scheduled for March 10, 1948, the emphasis on the services of the library brought an increase in the number of requests for information. The circulation reached a peak of 8,131 volumes for the month of March.¹¹⁷

When the results of the tax election were tabulated, the library tax had passed, providing a two-mill tax for ten years to support the library. The tax carried in both popular and property vote with 308 popular votes for the library tax and 20 against the tax. The property valuation \$667,500.92 in assessments were voted for the library tax and \$59,710.00 in assessments were voted against the library tax.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 8.

¹¹⁶Ibid., pp. 10-11.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 13.

¹¹⁸Ibid., pp. 13-14.

The cost of the demonstration amounted to \$4,050.00 provided by the parish and \$29,716.20 expended by the State Library, excluding the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department personnel engaged in the demonstration.¹¹⁹

Iberia Parish Library Demonstration

The Iberia Parish Library Demonstration was the outgrowth of the efforts of a group of women in New Iberia, who had operated a small library in the town of New Iberia for a number of years, and who realized that more adequate parish-wide library service was needed. An appeal was made to the Louisiana State Library for assistance and professional guidance in securing a parish library; and with the help of the state agency, the women of New Iberia aroused parish-wide interest in the project.¹²⁰

The work of the citizens interested in library development resulted in the establishment of a parish library on June 14, 1945 by the action of the Police Jury, and a request for a demonstration of library service was made to

¹¹⁹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹²⁰Elizabeth Cammack, "Iberia Parish Library Demonstration, October 24, 1947-October 31, 1948" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1949), p. 2.

the State Library.¹²¹

The State Library was not prepared to initiate the library demonstration in Iberia Parish until the fall of 1947. In preparing for the demonstration, a field worker from the State Library was sent to Iberia parish to make a community survey and to work with local citizens in developing the service with branches and a bookmobile to serve the rural people of the parish.¹²²

In making financial arrangements for the demonstration library, the Iberia Parish Police Jury appropriated \$7,000.00 for local operating expenses.¹²³

Elizabeth Cammack, a professionally trained and experienced librarian, was placed in charge of the Iberia Parish Library Demonstration. The parish librarian worked with the field worker from the State Library, Sallie J. Farrell, in equipping the headquarters and branch libraries, employing and training the local personnel, and making the final arrangements for the library. Distribution centers were established in New Iberia, Jeanerette, Weeks, and Loreauville. Service to the rural residents was provided by the bookmobile. The Washington Branch for Negroes located in New Iberia gave

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

parish-wide service.¹²⁴

Emphasis was placed on service from the opening of the demonstration on October 24, 1947. The public relations program stressed the services of the library and the tax election for local support of the library, which would determine whether or not the library would continue after the one-year demonstration of library service conducted by the State Library.¹²⁵

The librarian stated that immediately after the opening of the demonstration, library publicity was intensified.

. . . work was started on trying to make the people of the parish aware of this new service. Talks on the library were made to as many groups as possible. These included service clubs, women's clubs, home demonstration clubs, garden clubs, P.T.A.'s, official bodies, schools, any group that might be interested or might be made interested in the library. Always there was a mention of the coming tax election to continue the work. . . . Many individual contacts were made all over the parish. Displays were used in downtown store windows, at club meetings and at the parish fair. In one of the picture shows in Jeanerette a trailer advertising library services was used. Local newspapers were carefully scanned for any event or news that might be tied in with the library. Personal letters were written to new parents, to newly elected club officers, and to new residents. Perhaps the most effective of these letters were those which welcomed newcomers and invited them to use the library.¹²⁶

¹²⁴Ibid., pp. 2-7.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 4.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 5.

The library provided information for patrons in response to various special requests including: regional history, tourist attractions, industrial machinery, sugar cane production and chemistry, trapping, flower culture, astronomy, sewing, stamp collection, housing, interior decoration, staging flower shows, camellias, and azaleas.¹²⁷

During the period of the library demonstration, the Iberia Parish Library circulated 84,132 volumes to 3,631 registered borrowers.¹²⁸

The tax election to secure continued support of the library was called for July 13, 1948. The two-mill property tax for ten years was passed with the following results of the election: property assessment voted for the library tax was \$1,093,162.00 and against the tax was \$68,781.00. The popular vote for the tax totaled 171, with 24 votes against the library tax.¹²⁹

The local authorities appropriated \$7,000.00 for the support of the demonstration library. The State Library expended \$36,158.25 on the project, exclusive of the salaries

¹²⁷Ibid., p. 9.

¹²⁸Ibid., p. 16.

¹²⁹Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 16.

of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the project.¹³⁰

Beauregard Parish Library Demonstration

The establishment of a library in Beauregard Parish was the result of the efforts of the members of the Citizens' Library Movement who talked about the value of a library until the majority of the people in the community had a "desire in their hearts and minds for a parish library . . . which would answer their needs for the enlightenment and enrichment that only books can give."¹³¹

On July 10, 1945, the Police Jury of the parish passed the ordinance of library establishment in response to the demands of the interested citizens; and a request was made to the State Library for a one-year demonstration of library service.¹³²

In 1947 the State Library assumed the responsibility for the background work of initiating the demonstration, and

¹³⁰See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹³¹Dorothy Duncan, "Beauregard Parish Library Demonstration, December, 1947-December, 1948" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1949), p. (1).

¹³²Ibid.

local arrangements were made for the "procedures which go into the opening of a demonstration library."

The official opening of the library occurred on December 11, 1947, with Henry W. Bethard, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the State Library, as master of ceremonies. Local and state officials and visitors spoke enthusiastically of the library program.¹³³ A member of the Louisiana Legislature from DeRidder stated:

This library is the realization of the hopes and the fruition of the work of years by Beauregard citizens. . . . As your representative in the Legislature and as a member of the appropriations committee, I know of the efforts of the State Library to obtain funds to assist parishes with demonstrations. . . . I see great future progress for the library movement in Louisiana, because of the importance of books as supplied by the free public library . . . books for vocational training, for forming an informed citizenry, for general adult education. The fundamental principles of our American government are safe only when we have an intelligent, informed, and happy people. The library can bring about that safeguard for democracy.¹³⁴

The services of the library were made available through the main library in DeRidder, a branch in Merryville, extensive coverage of the parish by the bookmobile, and the Carver Branch for Negroes.¹³⁵

From the opening of the demonstration, emphasis was

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid., p. 3.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 13.

placed on publicizing the services of the library through talks to clubs and organizations, newspaper articles, displays, exhibits, and letters to patrons. Efforts were made to create a general awareness of the library and to strengthen the public relations of the library through effective service.¹³⁶

In April of 1948, the Board of Control of the Beauregard Parish Library outlined a campaign to secure the passage of a property tax of two mills for ten years to provide support for the library following the period of the demonstration, when the support of the State Library was scheduled to be terminated.¹³⁷

After the tax election was called by the Police Jury for June 15, 1948, a publicity program was executed, including: letters to all club presidents asking for endorsements of the parish library tax, exhibits in down town store windows, feature stories in the local papers, and contacts with taxpayers.¹³⁸

The friends of the library took the initiative in the campaign to secure the passage of the library tax, by making personal contacts with the voters of the community and

¹³⁶Ibid., p. 10. ¹³⁷Ibid., p. 9. ¹³⁸Ibid.

exerting their influence for the tax which was needed to secure the continuation of the library.¹³⁹

The results of the tax election assured the support of the library. The tabulation showed that the property assessment voted for the library amounted to \$347,628.00 and the assessment voted against the tax was \$101,825.00. There were 250 popular votes for the tax and 74 popular votes against the library tax.¹⁴⁰

During the period of the demonstration, 58,392 volumes were circulated to 2,881 registered borrowers. The library supplied materials in response to 2,369 special requests for information.¹⁴¹

The State Library expended \$24,576.28 on the Beauregard Parish Library Demonstration, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the project. The local authorities spent \$6,898.54 on the project.¹⁴²

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁴⁰Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly, Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 17.

¹⁴¹Duncan, op. cit., pp. 11-12.

¹⁴²See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

Evangeline Parish Library Demonstration

The importance of having public library service to improve the way of life for the people of Evangeline Parish was recognized in 1940 by a local Catholic priest, Father Irving A. DeBlanc, who organized a small lending library in Ville Platte. Many of the inhabitants of the parish were decendants of the Acadians, who settled in Louisiana following their expulsion from Canada. In some families of French origin, the language and customs of their ancestors were maintained, and the general educational level was low.¹⁴³ "Father DeBlanc had the interest and welfare of the people close to his heart and keenly felt the need for improvement of the general educational level."¹⁴⁴

After Father DeBlanc initiated the small library in Ville Platte, he started the movement to secure the establishment of a parish library and a demonstration of parish-wide library service by the state library agency.¹⁴⁵

The customary procedure for securing the establishment of a parish library was reversed in Evangeline. The

¹⁴³Mary W. Harris, "The Louisiana Library Demonstration Plan" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Library Extension Department, 1952), p. 33.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 33-34.

usual procedure in parish library establishment was for leaders and organizations interested in the library to request leadership and advice from the Louisiana State Library before presenting the request for library establishment to the Police Jury, but in Evangeline Parish, Father DeBlanc discussed the project with the president and the members of the Police Jury and worked for the passage of the formal resolution of library establishment.¹⁴⁶

The first knowledge the State Library had of the establishment of a parish library was a letter to the State Librarian from the Secretary-Treasurer of the Police Jury, enclosing a certified copy of an ordinance establishing the Evangeline Parish Public Library, August 13, 1945.¹⁴⁷

When the announcement of the establishment of the Evangeline Parish Library and the request for a one-year demonstration of library service reached the State Library, the State Librarian explained to the parish authorities that with six parishes waiting for demonstrations, the demonstration of library service in Evangeline Parish could not be conducted for several years. In October of 1945, a field representative of the State Library visited Evangeline Parish to discuss the library demonstration with the officials and to explain the delay in initiating the demonstration.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

In March of 1948, a field representative of the State Library returned to Evangeline Parish to begin making local arrangements for the demonstration of library service. Contacts were made with the Police Jury and with Father DeBlanc. The field representative of the State Library stressed the importance of having community leaders and organizations informed about the project. Explanations were made concerning the responsibility of the Police Jury to provide some local support for the library and the obligation of the Police Jury to appoint a five-member Board of Control of the Library, composed of civic-minded leaders representing all sections of the parish, with the president of the Police Jury an ex-officio member.¹⁴⁹

The Police Jury appropriated \$6,500.00 in April of 1948 to help finance the library demonstration. In July of 1948, the Police Jury appointed the Board of Control of the library including: Father Irving A. DeBlanc, President; Mrs. Roy Allen, Ville Platte; Mr. Fulton Bacon, Basile; Mr. Theo Melancon, Mamou; Mr. Hugh Campbell, Pine Prairie; and Mr. Josien Ardoin, President of the Police Jury, ex-officio.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

¹⁵⁰Doris Lessel, "Report of Demonstration Library, Evangeline Parish, 1948-1949" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1950), p. (1).

Following the action of the Evangeline Parish Police Jury in 1948, the Extension Department of the State Library centered its activities on making the necessary preparations for the opening of the demonstration in Evangeline Parish. Books were selected, ordered, and processed and magazine subscriptions were placed, a bookmobile was ordered, and a librarian for the demonstration was appointed. Arrangements were made for the headquarters and Ville Platte Branch and branches in Basile and Mamou.¹⁵¹

The initial general collection for the Evangeline Parish Library Demonstration included 7,489 volumes, and the Vannette bookmobile was stocked with 800 books ready to be circulated.¹⁵²

The public relations program of the demonstration was planned to inform the public concerning the services of the library, to interest the citizens in using the library, and to gain support for the new institution. Personal contacts were made with groups and individuals, press releases were issued, and meetings were arranged with the Board of Control of the Library, the Lions Club, Rotary Club, Cosmopolitan Club, the Ville Platte Parent-Teacher Association,

¹⁵¹Harris, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁵²Ibid.

and a group of Negro citizens.¹⁵³

The opening of the Evangeline Parish Library Demonstration occurred on September 20, 1948. Announcements of the opening of the library were sent to all parish officials, club presidents, school principals, church leaders, and community leaders. A parade through the town of Ville Platte was arranged before the opening ceremonies. The Sacred Heart High School band, in colorful uniforms, with majorettes leading and followed by the bookmobile with a loud speaker attached, announced the opening. After the official program in Ville Platte, programs took place in succession in the three branches, Basile, Mamou, and the Negro Branch.¹⁵⁴

During the period of the library demonstration, exhibits, story hours, newspaper articles, talks to groups, personal contacts, and a mimeographed monthly newsletter, were employed as public relations activities which were planned to reach readers.¹⁵⁵

In January of 1949, the Board of Control of the library began planning for a tax election to secure local support for the Evangeline Parish Library following the period

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 36-37.

¹⁵⁵Lassel, op. cit., pp. 5-7.

of the demonstration. They were of the opinion that the Police Jury favored ample support for the library. The board members unanimously agreed that a tax adequate to provide for efficient personnel and sufficient operating funds should be sought. The Board of Control had decided to request a tax election asking for a three mill tax for three years when some opposition to the tax was expressed on the part of a number of large taxpayers. After a reconsideration of the issue, the Police Jury called a tax election for August 16, 1949 for one and one-half mills tax for three years.¹⁵⁶

A publicity program was conducted to inform the taxpayers of the value and the cost of the Evangeline Parish Library. The public was reached through press releases, radio announcements, personal contacts, and wide distribution of a mimeographed news bulletin which presented facts about the services of the parish library and explained the cost of maintaining the library.¹⁵⁷

Even though there was a generally favorable public attitude toward the library and the press and radio had been

¹⁵⁶Harris, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., p. 43.

cooperative in publicizing the issue, when the election returns were tabulated, the library tax failed by \$34,197.00 in property assessment. The results showed 820 popular votes for the tax, representing \$1,252,176.00 in property assessment, with 447 popular votes against the tax, representing \$1,286,373.00 in property assessment.¹⁵⁸

The results of the popular vote convinced the local politicians that the majority of the taxpayers of the parish wanted Evangeline to retain its library. With citizen interest high, various civic organizations passed resolutions requesting that the Police Jury call another tax election to secure the continued support of the library. The second tax election was called for October 25, 1949.¹⁵⁹

A Taxpayers Committee was organized by the business men of the parish to arrange an intensive program of publicity. The Committee called a series of meetings at various points in the parish to explain the issues involved in the tax election, and made personal contacts to inform the citizens of the need for supporting the parish library.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸News item in the Gazette (Ville Platte, Louisiana), August 18, 1949.

¹⁵⁹Harris, op. cit., p. 43.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 44.

The opposition to the library tax was felt in the second tax election, but with the proponents organized, the results were favorable to the library. When the official tabulation of the election was made, the property assessment voted for the library tax was \$1,737,502.00 and the property assessment voted against the tax was \$1,673,921.00. In popular vote, there were 971 votes for the tax and 729 votes against the tax.¹⁶¹

The successful outcome of the election was felt in the library. Registration and use of the branches and book-mobile increased. Genuine interest in the future of the library, as a locally supported institution, was apparent as the people congratulated the library board, the staff, and themselves.¹⁶²

The local cost of the Evangeline Parish Library Demonstration amounted to \$6,500.00. The State Library expended \$30,656.85 on the project, exclusive of the salaries of the personnel of the Extension Department engaged in the preparation of the collection and the supervision of the demonstration.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹Ibid.

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

During the period of the demonstration, the library circulated 95,322 volumes to 4,438 registered borrowers. The bookmobile was credited with twenty-eight per cent of the total circulation.¹⁶⁴

Avoyelles Parish Library Demonstration

The Community Civic Club of Bunkie took the initiative in securing a library for Avoyelles Parish, by contacting the state library agency in 1946, and by arranging a public meeting in Bunkie for the Executive Secretary to discuss the issue. A letter from Sue L. Eakin, President of the Community Civic Club, addressed to Essae M. Culver stated in part:

The Community Civic Club of the Town of Bunkie represents a group of persons particularly interested in seeing established in our town and the parish of Avoyelles library facilities more adequate than those we now enjoy.

As a first step in this direction, we would greatly appreciate an informative outline from you as to just how the Louisiana Library Commission operates in establishing and operating its parish supported libraries. We understand that these parish libraries become self-supporting when the parish votes the necessary tax after a demonstration period of operation under the direction of your office. What we are particularly anxious to find out is, what are the necessary preliminary qualifications for your commission to undertake such a demonstration; what facilities and expenses must be met by the community and local authorities during the period of demonstration; and conditions being favorable, what would

¹⁶⁴Lassel, op. cit., pp. 5, 12.

be the earliest approximate date when arrangements could be undertaken to secure such a demonstration library for the parish of Avoyelles. On this last question, we realize that there is probably a waiting list of parishes eager to secure such a demonstration library. However, the Community Civic Club of Bunkie takes a long range view of the needs not only of this community but likewise the entire parish, and it is realized that a considerable amount of education and promotional effort may be necessary in this locality to insure the proper response on the matter of taxation even after the demonstration may have proved itself. It is for this reason that we are interested in gaining all the pertinent and necessary information that can be assembled at the present time, even though the fulfillment of these matters may be some distance in the future.¹⁶⁵

The efforts of the library-minded citizens of Avoyelles Parish resulted in the establishment of the Avoyelles Parish Library by action of the Police Jury on May 8, 1946.

On May 21, 1949, in accordance with the established policies of the State Library, the Avoyelles Parish Library Demonstration was officially opened.¹⁶⁶

Distribution centers of the library were established in Marksville, where the headquarters library was located, and in Bunkie, Cottonport, Mansura, Moreauville, Plaucheville, and Simmesport. The bookmobile provided service to the unincor-

¹⁶⁵Letter from Sue L. Eakin to Essae M. Culver, March 26, 1946 (in Library Interest Collection of Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

¹⁶⁶Murrell C. Wellman, "Avoyelles Parish Library Demonstration, June, 1949" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1949), p. (1).

porated communities and the rural areas of the parish. Library service for Negroes was provided through a branch in Bunkie.¹⁶⁷

The service was planned to meet the reading needs of the 39,256 residents of the parish, many of whom derive their income from agricultural pursuits. The professional librarian in charge of the demonstration, Murrell C. Wellman, commented on the public response to the library, as follows:

This new agency for free public education met with spontaneous acceptance in all parts of the parish. That this service fills a critical need in the cultural and social development of Avoyelles is the concensus of its' people everywhere. That they seriously propose to take full advantage of these facilities is evidenced by the twenty-five hundred men, women, and children who have registered for service and the twelve thousand books and magazines borrowed during the first five weeks of the demonstration.¹⁶⁸

Promotional activities of the library included talks to civic, educational, agricultural, community clubs and organizations; film showings; press releases; and personal contacts of the librarian, the staff, and the members of the Board of Control of the library. Special activities included cooperation with the parish schools in emphasizing books and reading and the promotion of a "Librarian for a Day" project, in which seventeen schools and the parish library emphasized

¹⁶⁷Ibid.

¹⁶⁸Ibid.

services of the library and librarianship as a career.¹⁶⁹

In satisfying the reading needs of the patrons, the librarian followed the requests of the borrowers and made trips on the bookmobile to become acquainted with the rural residents and ascertain their particular interests. Practical books on all phases of agriculture were in demand. The rural readers sought well illustrated material, presented in an easy style and attractive format.¹⁷⁰

The people of the parish expressed their interest in the library, the farmers being especially appreciative of the service being provided for their children at the school bookmobile stops.¹⁷¹

The library circulated 119,448 volumes to 5,714 registered borrowers during the period of the demonstration, from May 21, 1949 through May 31, 1950.¹⁷²

The State Library commented on the Avoyelles Parish Library Demonstration as follows:

¹⁶⁹Murrell C. Wellman, "Avoyelles Parish Library Demonstration, November, 1949" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1949), p. (1).

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

¹⁷¹Ibid.

¹⁷²Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 17.

Because of the low literacy level of the parish and the large number of children in the population, the book collection was more than half juvenile. The parish librarian worked closely with farmers and cattle growers and supplemented the parish book collection by short time loans of specialized material from the State Library.¹⁷³

The tax election for continued local support of the library following the demonstration was scheduled for April 11, 1950. The election returns showed that the 2-1/2 mills property tax for five years had passed. There were 446 popular votes, representing \$1,068,200.00 in assessed property valuation, cast for the library tax; and 321 popular votes, representing \$721,860.00 in assessed property valuation, cast against the library tax.¹⁷⁴

The Avoyelles Parish Police Jury expended \$5,666.73 on the library demonstration, and the cost to the State Library amounted to \$43,751.84, exclusive of the expenses of the Extension Department in processing the collection and supervising the project.¹⁷⁵

Catahoula Parish Library Demonstration

The opening of the Catahoula Parish Library Demon-

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Ibid.

¹⁷⁵See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

stration on July 6, 1949 represented an accomplishment in community improvement for the civic-minded citizens who worked for the establishment of the library. The project represented the spread of an idea in the region, since the action of the neighboring parish, Concordia, establishing the first library in Louisiana to be supported by a special library tax was a stimulus to the establishment of the Catahoula Parish Library.¹⁷⁶

Dorothy Fairbanks was active in creating a local awareness of the need for a parish library, and Lillian Gray, Librarian of the Concordia Parish Library, met with the Woman's Club in Jonesville to explain the legal requirements for library establishment.¹⁷⁷

The citizens of Catahoula Parish explored the idea of securing library service through contractual arrangements with the Concordia Parish Library, but the plan was rejected. The local group decided to promote the establishment of a library in Catahoula Parish.¹⁷⁸

The Catahoula Parish Library was established by an

¹⁷⁶Eunice E. Heitman, "Catahoula Parish Library Demonstration, 1949-1950" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1950), p. 7.

¹⁷⁷Ibid.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 7-8.

ordinance passed by a unanimous vote of the Police Jury on July 1, 1946; and a request for a one-year demonstration of library service was made to the State Library.¹⁷⁹

The State Library began the preparations for the opening of the Catahoula Parish Library demonstration early in 1949. The Police Jury appropriated \$3,500.00 to meet the local expenses which included pay of part-time personnel, rent and supplies, while the State Library assumed the responsibility for the collection of materials, the professional personnel, and the organization, direction, and supervision of the demonstration.¹⁸⁰

The initial plans for the Catahoula Parish Library Demonstration were made in the parish by Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative of the State Library, and Rubie M. Hanks, Librarian of the Winn Parish Library, who worked in Catahoula Parish for three months. The background work for the demonstration included the location and preparation of the headquarters and the branches, planning of the bookmobile routes, selecting and training local personnel, and planning and initiating a publicity program to make the library a vital agency to the general public.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁸¹Ibid., pp. 10-11.

When some difficulty was encountered in locating a site for the headquarters library in Harrisonburg, the Police Jury offered to vacate their quarters to accommodate the library. William Peck, Jr., a member of the Jury said, "We (the Police Jury) can meet under a tree if necessary, as long as we have a library."¹⁸²

The Catahoula Parish Library Demonstration provided service to the 14,618 residents of the parish, through distribution centers in Harrisonburg, Jonesville, Sicily Island, the bookmobile, and the Jonesville Branch for Negroes.¹⁸³

During the period of the demonstration, the library registered 3,338 borrowers and circulated 85,192 volumes from a collection of 7,541 volumes.¹⁸⁴

The Catahoula Parish Library Demonstration emphasized the idea that "to bring together books and people, and to stress the importance of a lasting union of the same, was the principal task of the library staff during the demonstration year."¹⁸⁵ The campaign to secure a library tax for support of

¹⁸²Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁸³Ibid., pp. 11-14.

¹⁸⁴Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 17.

¹⁸⁵Heitman, op. cit., p. 18.

the parish library after the demonstration was considered a continuation of the staff policy in making people realize the need for books.¹⁸⁶

The library tax election was scheduled for February 21, 1950. The election had been publicized through the press, schools, churches, clubs, and the personal contacts of the members of the library Board of Control and the staff. Before it could be held, however, the news of the rising waters of the Mississippi River and its tributaries reached the parish. Many persons had to leave their homes and seek shelter under Red Cross tents, in rented quarters, or with relatives out of the flooded areas.¹⁸⁷

The citizens interested in the parish library considered postponing the tax election; but after much debate on the issue, the tax election was held as scheduled. The tabulation of the results of the election indicated a general and favorable acceptance of the library. There was a popular vote for the library tax totaling 243, representing a total of \$544,946.00 in assessed valuation of property voted for the tax, and 26 votes, representing \$29,140.00 in assessed valuation, voted against the library tax.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶Ibid.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 19.

The demonstration was conducted at a cost of \$3,500.00 to the local authorities and an expenditure of \$28,300.63 by the State Library, exclusive of the cost of supervision and book processing by the Extension Department.¹⁸⁹

Jefferson Parish Library Demonstration

The Jefferson Parish Library Demonstration was planned to serve a community which was growing rapidly, developing industrially and economically, and which reflected striking sociological contrasts in the educational accomplishment, interests, and vocational pursuits of the people. The population of Jefferson Parish increased from 50,427 in 1940 to 103,875 in 1950. The property assessment increased from \$32,712,432.00 in 1942 to \$65,535,635.00 in 1950. The educational accomplishment of the parish ranged from the level of the trappers and fishermen in the southern part of the parish, many of whom had completed no years of schooling, to the technically educated workers engaged in manufacturing in Gretna, Westwego, Marrero, and the sections of the parish adjoining the city of New Orleans.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹⁹⁰Bertha D. Hellum, "Jefferson Parish Library Demonstration Report, November, 1949-November, 1950" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1952), pp. 2-5.

The parish-wide demonstration of free library service opened formally on November 30, 1949, under the direction and supervision of the Louisiana State Library, with the cooperation of the Jefferson Parish Police Jury. In accordance with the established policies of the State Library, the state agency provided the professional staff of five persons, two clerks, a bookmobile and the cost of its operation, a processed collection of books with the card catalog, library supplies, and the expenses of the employees of the State Library who were engaged in the project.¹⁹¹

Branch libraries were opened during December of 1949 and January of 1950 in Gretna, Harahan, Jefferson, Kenner, Marrero, Metairie, Westwego, and Grand Isle, with service for Negroes established in Kenner and Walkertown (Marrero). The bookmobile started parish-wide service in January of 1950.¹⁹²

The Board of Control of the Library, which acted in an advisory capacity during the demonstration, was appointed by the Police Jury, and included W. R. Toledona, Sr., May Heebe, Errol Buckner, Joseph Dossat, Joseph Martina, and Alvin Gehring.¹⁹³

¹⁹¹Ibid., pp. (1)-2.

¹⁹²Ibid., p. (1).

¹⁹³Ibid., p. 2.

The demonstration library, which was headed by Bertha D. Hellum, registered 8,513 borrowers and circulated 119,355 volumes.¹⁹⁴

The cost of the demonstration to the parish authorities amounted to \$16,189.44, while the State Library expended \$66,164.39 on the program, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the activities of the Jefferson Parish Library Demonstration.¹⁹⁵

The local acceptance of the library was shown in the tax election for support of the library after the demonstration period, when a five mills tax for ten years was passed on June 20, 1950. The tabulation of the election returns showed that the property assessment voted for the tax amounted to \$1,218,750.00, and the property assessment against the tax was \$64,000.00. In popular vote, there were 779 votes for the library tax and only 20 votes against the tax.¹⁹⁶

St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration

The Police Jury of St. Tammany Parish, recognizing the importance of having parish-wide library service to

¹⁹⁴Ibid.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. (1).

¹⁹⁶Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 18.

enrich the resources of the community, passed an ordinance of library establishment on December 19, 1946. Following the establishment of the parish library, a request for a one-year demonstration of library service was submitted to the State Library.¹⁹⁷

In May of 1950 the State Library made the final preparations for the opening of the demonstration library in St. Tammany. The Police Jury appropriated \$4,780.00 for the local expenses of the project and named to the Board of Control of the library: Lucille Glisson, Glynn H. Brock, John Leveson, June Boyet, and Houston S. Talley.¹⁹⁸

The services of the library were organized to meet the reading needs and interests of the 26,988 residents of the parish. These showed marked contrasts in socio-economic qualities from the small farmers in the northern or piney woods section of the parish to the communities of commuters, inhabiting the southern part of the parish along the coast of Lake Pontchartrain and traveling to New Orleans to their places of employment.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷Kay Werner, "St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration, June, 1950-May, 1951" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1951), p. 3.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., pp. (1)-3.

The formal opening of the St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration was held in Covington on June 2, 1950, with John Hall Jacobs, Librarian of the New Orleans Public Library, as the principal speaker. Lois J. Lester, a member of the Board of Commissioners of the State Library, presided at the ceremonies which were attended by officials of the parish, members of the library profession, and two hundred and fifty interested citizens. Enthusiasm for the new parish library was expressed by the persons who spoke at the meeting.²⁰⁰

Distribution centers of the library were located in Covington, Abita Springs, Slidell, Mandeville, Madisonville, Pearl River, and Folsom. The J. S. Clark Memorial Library for Negroes was located in Covington. The bookmobile served the rural sections of the parish.²⁰¹

Special activities which were planned to promote the use of the library during the demonstration included an art exhibit; a series of visits to the schools, followed by scheduled visits of classes to the parish library; talks to the parish school faculty; talks to the P.T.A. and various civic clubs; film showings for several organizations, includ-

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 4.

²⁰¹Ibid., pp. 4-8.

ing the Business and Professional Women's Club, the firemen of Abita Springs, and the Woman's Progressive Union clubs.²⁰²

The St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration registered 3,842 borrowers and circulated 68,980 volumes during the period of the demonstration; and information was provided in response to 1,249 requests for special reference assistance.²⁰³

Kay Werner, the professionally trained librarian in charge of the demonstration, reported:

We know that statistics of use do not give us quality of use; there is no true measure, perhaps, except comments which linger in one's memory long after such have been made. We recall the steady circulation of Stuart's The Thread That Runs So True, a book enjoyed by students and teachers, and both men and women. Mr. Swartz, a lawyer and a prodigious reader, read nearly everything on the Covington library shelves and those (books) sent from the State Library for him. . . . One little old lady . . . in her late seventies, read all kinds of books from the Slidell branch. The Sister in charge of the library at the Convent used to send for teen age books, so she could read them before ordering them for the school library. A young man who tended store for his mother borrowed books from the bookmobile on Pastures in the South and Raising Beef Cattle in the South, and expressed his appreciation to us for the use of these two books.²⁰⁴

The voters of the parish expressed their approval of the parish library when they went to the polls. In spite of

²⁰²Ibid., p. 15.

²⁰³Ibid., p. 16, 19.

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 19.

a rain storm on March 27, 1951, 1,027 votes were cast in favor of the library tax, with only 109 votes against the library tax; and the property assessment voted for the library tax amounted to \$1,323,633.50, with \$147,831.13 in property assessment voted against the tax. The election provided a special property tax of 2-3/4 mills for a period of ten years to support the parish library after the one-year demonstration of library service.²⁰⁵

The local authorities expended \$4,780.00 on the St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration. The State Library spent \$34,053.82 on the project, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the direction, supervision, and the technical processes of the St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration.²⁰⁶

An editorial in the St. Tammany Farmer which appeared after the tax election, stated:

The people of St. Tammany parish showed last week they want to be progressive. By the overwhelming vote cast in favor of the hospital and parish library, the citizens expressed their desire to keep going forward and take advantage of every opportunity offered to

²⁰⁵News item in the St. Tammany Farmer (Covington, Louisiana), April 6, 1951.

²⁰⁶See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

improve the living standards in our parish.

.....
 We commend first, the Louisiana State Library for its offer of extending this service to St. Tammany parish. Certainly not to be overlooked is the St. Tammany Parish Police Jury's acceptance of the proposition for a year's demonstration and then giving the people a chance to say for themselves whether they wanted to continue it or not. We feel sure that members' first and only thought in the matter was to give the people what they wanted as long as the parish could afford it or would provide means of financing it. The people provided the means themselves, and they are to be commended for their action.²⁰⁷

Library Service to Negroes

State-wide library service to Negroes was continued during 1946-1950, by the State Library, from the branch located at Southern University. The service followed the same regulations as those applied to the Readers' Services Department of the State Library, which offered informational services to adults only, since lack of funds prevented the inclusion of fiction and children's books for general circulation.²⁰⁸

An inter-library loan service was offered to the parishes in the state which have agencies giving library

²⁰⁷Editorial in the St. Tammany Farmer (Covington, Louisiana), April 6, 1951.

²⁰⁸Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 25.

service to Negroes, and a direct mailing service was provided for the Negroes in the state without access to parish library facilities.²⁰⁹

The service was publicized through newspaper stories; exhibits in the library and on the campus of Southern University; letters to patrons, school principals, and librarians; contacts with high school students; personal and group contacts of the librarian in attendance at meetings of educational and religious organizations.²¹⁰

The reference and loan service for Negroes was under the direction and supervision of the Extension Department. A professionally trained librarian, Adele B. Jackson, was placed in charge of the branch on November 1, 1948 succeeding Consuella P. Winder, who resigned.²¹¹

The records of use of the Negro Branch show steady increases following the appointment of Adele B. Jackson, and the Extension Department attributed the increase in use of the service to the continuity of the staff, the effective

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 14.

²¹¹Ibid., pp. 31-32.

publicity campaigns, and an enlarged program of field work.²¹²

The growth and use of the Negro Branch is shown in the table which follows, based on the records of the Extension Department of the State Library:²¹³

Year	Book Collection	Registration	Branch Circulation
1946	3,032	511	3,655
1947	3,338	595	3,150
1948	3,770	687	3,389
1949	4,235	1,059	5,724
1950	4,569	1,168	6,397

X. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The continuing professional growth of librarians, engaged in the Louisiana program of parish library development, was stimulated during the years 1946 through 1950 by annual conferences on current issues in librarianship.

²¹²Ibid., p. 14.

²¹³Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 24; and Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 14. Also see Appendix, Table II on the Growth and Use of the Negro Branch of the Louisiana State Library, p. 456.

The activities of the State Board of Library Examiners maintained standards of certification for administrative librarians during the years 1946-1950.

The following section covers the professional conferences.

Conferences on Librarianship

The annual conferences sponsored by the State Library during the period of 1946-1950, brought librarians, staff members, and trustees together to study professional problems and issues of local, state, and national concern in library service and development.²¹⁴

A conference of parish librarians was held at the State Library on September 16-17, 1946, to study handling of tax funds, problems of personnel, and school services.²¹⁵

On September 19-20, 1947, a conference of parish librarians and trustees was held at the State Library, which focused the attention of the group on public relations, bookmobiles, trends in library architecture, the proposals for a

²¹⁴Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), pp. 22-23; and Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 13.

²¹⁵Twelfth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1946-1947 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1948), p. 23.

postwar program of public library development, and the work of the Great Books Foundation.²¹⁶

A representative of the Great Books Foundation, Charles F. Stubbe, was the featured speaker at the final session of the conference on September 20, 1947, when the trustees of the parish libraries were especially invited to hear Stubbe discuss the activities of the Great Books Foundation and demonstrate the techniques used in Great Books discussion groups.²¹⁷

In August of 1948, a work conference of parish librarians was held in Natchitoches, on the campus of Northwestern State College, with consultants from the Library School of Louisiana State University, the State Department of Education, the State Library, and a specialist in regional library development, Gretchen Knief Schenk of Summerdale, Alabama.²¹⁸

The 1948 conference was planned to study the Louisiana state-wide program of library development in comparison with the patterns of state-wide library extension of other states.

²¹⁶Ibid.

²¹⁷"Great Books Program," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 11:7, November, 1947.

²¹⁸Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1948-1949 (Baton Rouge: n.n., 1950), p. 13.

The out-of-state consultant, Gretchen Knief Schenk, provided leadership to the conference from her study and experience by presenting the point of view and the activities of other states in the same field of work.²¹⁹

A two day conference of parish librarians held at the State Library on September 23-24, 1949, featured discussions of the place of the public library as a part of government, professional responsibilities in recruiting for librarianship, and material for use in providing reference and informational services.²²⁰

The 1950 conference of parish librarians and staff members was held at Louisiana State University July 30-August 5, 1950, under the cooperative sponsorship of the Louisiana State Library and the Library School of Louisiana State University. The conference was described as follows:

Outstandingly successful was the State-wide Conference of Parish Librarians and Library Workers, planned and directed by Sarah Jones of the Extension Department staff. In addition to 49 staff members from the two promoting groups and program guests, 74 parish librarians and library workers, representing almost all operating parish libraries at the time, participated in a five-day program which included not only discussion of library techniques, but presentation of films, lectures on community delineation by a sociologist, and on working with lay boards by a chamber of commerce secretary, model book review,

²¹⁹Ibid.

²²⁰Ibid.

talks by a merchandising expert and a bookshop owner. Mrs. Gretchen Schenk of Summerdale, Alabama, distinguished authority in public library work, was consultant, and much of the program centered around the timely Public Library Inquiry.²²¹

XI. CELEBRATION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

The Louisiana Library Association and the Citizens' Library Movement of Louisiana jointly sponsored a luncheon celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the initiation of the program of state-wide library development of the Louisiana State Library, formerly the Louisiana Library Commission, on March 31, 1950, during the annual meeting of the Louisiana Library Association.²²²

The Louisiana Library Commission was created by Act 225 of the Louisiana Legislature of 1920, but the work of the Commission in actively promoting state-wide public library service was not initiated until 1925. In 1925, the agency received a Carnegie grant of \$50,000.00 through the League of Library Commissions and a professionally trained

²²¹Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 23.

²²²"Louisiana State Library Lauded on 25th Anniversary," Library Journal, 75:851, May 1, 1950.

Executive Secretary, Essae Martha Culver, was employed to initiate the library development project.²²³

Librarians, trustees, and friends of libraries from various sections of the state and the nation, numbering three hundred, attended the luncheon honoring the State Librarian, Essae Martha Culver, the Board of Commissioners, and the staff of the State Library.

Noteworthy among the guests of the occasion, seated at the head table, were Mrs. Albert Storm of South Carolina, who as president of the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs in 1920 sponsored the bill creating the Louisiana Library Commission; Mr. Robert Lester, Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation. . . . Mr. Milton Lord, President of the American Library Association and Librarian of the Boston Public Library; Mr. Francis Welcek, representing the citizens who have profited most by the library services; representative of the Governor's Office, Mr. Theo Cangelosi, and the Secretary of State's Office, Mrs. Wade O. Martin, Jr.; State Superintendent of Education Shelby Jackson and Mrs. Jackson; the Board of the Louisiana State Library, past and present; the officers of the Citizens' Library Movement and the Louisiana Library Association.²²⁴

John Hall Jacobs, Librarian of the New Orleans Public Library, presided at the luncheon where various speakers commended the work of the State Library. Milton E. Lord called the program an "outstanding example of pioneering library

²²³Ibid.

²²⁴Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. (1).

work."²²⁵ Robert E. Lester characterized the state-wide demonstration of library service of the Louisiana Library Commission as one of the finest expenditures of Carnegie money.²²⁶

The Louisiana Legislature took action in May of 1950 in a concurrent resolution commending the work of the Louisiana State Library, which stated:

WHEREAS, 1950 marks the 25th anniversary of our Louisiana State Library's statewide program of library development, and

WHEREAS, through book-lending by mail anywhere in the state and through establishing demonstration libraries, the State Library has made available to citizens all over Louisiana the benefits of library service and the wealth of information, knowledge and inspiration to be found in good books, and

WHEREAS, Louisiana's library program, repeatedly recognized nationally as outstanding among library plans of all the states, was used as a model for the national library demonstration bill before Congress and was cited recently by the president of the American Library Association as a model to other states, now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the Legislature of Louisiana, Senate and House concurring, that the Legislature go on record commending the Louisiana State Library as one of our most valuable educational institutions and that we do extend to the State Library Board and the Library Staff congratulations upon the conspicuous library

²²⁵"Louisiana State Library Lauded on 25th Anniversary," Library Journal, 75:651, May 1, 1950.

²²⁶Ibid.

progress made possible for Louisiana.²²⁷

The occasion was commemorated in an illustrated brochure, prepared and written by Margaret Dixon and Nantelle Gittinger, entitled The First Twenty-Five Years; and the brochure was distributed at the anniversary luncheon.²²⁸ The text of the publication was reprinted in the Spring, 1950 issue of the Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, which featured the program of the state agency.²²⁹

²²⁷Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 16:47, Spring, 1950; and News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), May 14, 1950.

²²⁸Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 2.

²²⁹Margaret Dixon, and Nantelle Gittinger, "The First Twenty-Five Years," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:36-48, Spring, 1950.

CHAPTER VII

A PERIOD OF LIBRARY PROGRESS (1951-1955)

The years 1951 through 1955 brought marked progress in the Louisiana state-wide program of library development. Library services were expanded by the headquarters of the State Library. Regional library service to the blind was strengthened by a State appropriation to facilitate the service. The field services of the State Library were coordinated to the Administrative Department of the agency under the direction of Sallie J. Farrell. Demonstration libraries were conducted in Franklin, Claiborne, Iberville, Tensas, LaSalle, Caldwell, St. Mary, East Carroll, St. Martin, and St. Charles parishes.

The work of the Extension Department was reorganized in 1954, following the retirement of Mary W. Harris as Director of Extension, when Lois Shortess was named as Head of the Extension Department.

The State Library sponsored three special promotional projects to enrich and improve library services throughout

the State, and the state library agency cooperated in the work of the first Louisiana Conference on Adult Education. The activities were planned to make a contribution to the readers' services of the established parish libraries and the demonstration libraries of the State Library.

An outstanding achievement in the history of the State Library was the successful culmination of years of effort to secure more adequate housing, when the Louisiana Legislature of 1954 authorized a bond issue of two million dollars for a new State Library building.

Accounts of the activities of the State Library during 1951-1955 are presented in the sections to follow.

I. ADMINISTRATION

During the years 1951-1955, several changes occurred in the membership of the Board of Commissioners of the State Library, but the professional direction of the institution was continued by Essae M. Culver, as State Librarian. In 1954 the field services of the library were coordinated in the Administrative Department, under the direction of Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative, after the retirement of Mary W. Harris as Director of Extension.

The financial support of the State Library was

increased during the period. The action of the Legislature in authorizing bonds for a new building brought increased responsibility to the Administrative Department in this area of the institution's development.

Details of these administrative developments are presented in the sections to follow.

Membership of the Board of Commissioners

James L. Love of Hammond became Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the State Library in October of 1953, following Harriet S. Daggett, who had served as Chairman of the Board and whose term of office on the Commission had expired July 31, 1953. The members of the Board who served with James L. Love through 1955 included: Mary Mims of Shreveport, J. H. Henry of Melrose, Mrs. Fensky Terzia of Monroe, and Joel Fletcher of Lafayette.¹

In reporting the changes in the membership of the Board of Commissioners during 1952-1953, the State Library announced:

. . . the appointment of James L. Love to succeed C. Paul Phelps whose term expired July 31, 1952; Dr. Joel Fletcher to succeed James T. Enloe whose term expired July 31, 1951. . . . Mrs. Fensky Terzia to

¹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955
(Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. iv.

succeed Dr. Harriet Daggett whose term expired July 31, 1953.²

The State Librarian

The administration of the State Library was maintained under the professional direction of Essae M. Culver as State Librarian.³ Special recognition of the accomplishments of the State Librarian, who had headed the Louisiana program of state-wide library development from 1925 when she assumed the duties of Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission, came in 1954 when Pomona College of Claremont, California conferred the degree of Doctor of Letters upon Essae M. Culver, "in recognition of her notable career in library work and her contributions to the growth of a state-wide system of libraries in Louisiana."⁴

Essae M. Culver, as the chief professional officer of the State Library and Head of the Administrative Department of the institution, gave "direction and supervision of all other departments, with the direct responsibility for all

²Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. iv.

³Ibid., p. 28.

⁴Cary J. Richardson, "Pomona College Honors Essae M. Culver," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17: 131, Fall, 1954.

financial transactions and the direction and supervision of all field activities."⁵

Under the direction of the State Librarian, the Assistant State Librarian, Debora R. Abramson, handled personnel work and supervised the Readers' Services of the agency. The Field Representative, Sallie J. Farrell, coordinated the consultant and advisory services, and the field work of the State Library.⁶

Financial Support

The program of the State Library was supported during the period of 1951-1955 by appropriations of the Louisiana Legislature, as follows:⁷

For the year ending June 30, 1951, \$225,000.00

For the year ending June 30, 1952, \$225,000.00

⁵Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 2.

⁶Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 4-10, 15-17.

⁷Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 41; and Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 34; and Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 40.

For the year ending June 30, 1953, \$250,000.00
For the year ending June 30, 1954, \$250,000.00
For the year ending June 30, 1955, \$267,000.00

An outstanding accomplishment in the history of the State Library was the favorable action of the 1954 Louisiana Legislature in passing a bond issue of two million dollars to provide a new building for the State Library.⁸ Details concerning the building program of the State Library are included in the final section of this study.

II. FIELD SERVICES

The field services of the State Library, which were performed by the State Librarian, the Field Representative and two Field Consultants, were more closely coordinated in the Administrative Department during the years 1951-1955. Following the retirement of Mary W. Harris as Director of the Extension Department, Sallie J. Farrell was placed in charge of the field services; and Lois F. Shortess was named Head of the Extension Department, which organized and processed materials for the demonstration libraries.⁹

⁸Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 2.

⁹Ibid., p. 20.

Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative of the State Library, and Sarah I. Jones and Kathryn Adams, as Field Consultants, gave supervision and direction to the work of the demonstration libraries. The field staff visited established libraries throughout the State and gave advisory service on various problems including: preparation of budgets, planning public relations and promotional activities, tax campaigns, anniversary celebrations, summer reading programs, building plans, bookmobile specifications, personnel, professional conferences and in-service training programs.¹⁰

In several parishes where parish libraries have not been established, including, St. James, West Carroll, East Feliciana, St. Bernard, and Jackson, the Field Representative conferred with interested citizens and officials. She provided background information concerning the legal requirements for library establishment, and the demonstration program of the Louisiana State Library, and gave advisory services on campaigning for library establishment.¹¹

III. READERS' SERVICES

The services to readers provided by the State Library

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 7-8.

¹¹Ibid., p. 8.

during 1951-1955 were under the supervision of Debora R. Abramson, Assistant State Librarian. During the period, the services were strengthened by the addition of professional personnel and resources in the reference and circulation department, the enlarging of the holdings in the Louisiana Collection, the expansion of the film services, participation in the activities of the state-wide Reading Festival, and the enlarging of the program of the State Library in the area of service to the blind, by contractual arrangements with the New Orleans Public Library. The sections to follow cover details of these services to readers.

Reference and Circulation

The reference and circulation services of the State Library were improved during the period by an increased staff. In September of 1955, Ida Elizabeth Raulins, a professionally trained librarian with experience in the reference and inter-library loan services of the State Library, was named Reference Librarian. Marcia W. Perkins, a professionally trained and experienced librarian, was employed as a full-time Order Librarian for the Readers' Services Department. The assignment of the two professionally trained staff members facilitated the services to readers and improved

the efficiency of the organization.¹²

The printed Library of Congress Catalog was purchased for the reference department, thus adding an invaluable tool to the entire library. Other facilities which were added to improve the service were a Verifax Copier, by which pages of books may be photo-copied, and a Microfilm Reader with prints of certain Louisiana newspapers and materials.¹³

During the period, services to readers were continued through inter-library loan and direct mail. The Readers' Services Department cooperated with libraries throughout the State in the Reading Festival, and in continuing the plan of issuing a Reading Certificate to patrons, who had read twelve books on a variety of subjects during the year.¹⁴

The table on the following page shows the growth and use of the book collection of the State Library, the special reference service requests, and the number of reading certificates issued yearly from 1951 through 1955:¹⁵

¹²Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 15-16.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 15. Also see Appendix, Table I on Growth and Use of the Book Collection and Reference Services of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 455.

Year	Total Book Collection	Total Circulation	Special Reference Requests	Reading Certificates
1951	340,730	1,052,589	48,873	1,115
1952	344,635	973,915	45,958	1,521
1953	354,230	866,169	47,493	1,686
1954	362,660	853,985	47,806	1,585
1955	366,902	775,093	49,855	1,463

The decrease in the circulation of books by the State Library during the years 1951 through 1955 was noted as related to the growth of parish library facilities to meet the needs of general readers in the local situations.

While the number of special requests for information varied each year, the Reference Department handled 49,855 requests for special materials or information during 1955. In commenting on the special reference services, the Assistant State Librarian stated:

When one considers the variety of subjects represented by this total, and the considerable number of patrons served, as well as the time it takes to assist with a club program, or compile a list of available titles on a given subject (each counted as one request), one may know that the value of this service, while intangible, is of great importance to the people of Louisiana.¹⁶

¹⁶Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955
(Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 15.

A voluntary comment from a patron in Coushatta, Louisiana, addressed to the State Librarian, stated:

I have wanted so often to write you and thank you for the wonderful service you and your staff have rendered. I have been confined to my bed for the past six months, and the books which you folks have so promptly sent me have changed that confinement from a dread to a real pleasure. I can now get about a little and want to take this opportunity to type a short note of thanks to you.

. . . I lived in Coushatta two years before I fortunately found out that anyone living in a parish without a library could request the service which you have been giving me. . . . I am from New Orleans and very used to having library facilities, and it just never occurred to me that small towns suffered the lack of one, and one of my husband's cousins . . . tells me that you are personally responsible for the excellent progress it has made. There are many of us who are truly grateful for what you have done.¹⁷

A comment from a reader in Creole, Louisiana stated:

I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your services. . . . I came from a state that did not have state sales tax nor state income tax; and I have not felt too happy about these two levys, especially as I live in a section where none of this money was spent on improvements like paved roads, bridges, etc. I, therefore, feel that your free lending library is the one redeeming feature of the state.¹⁸

A school librarian in Hahnville, Louisiana wrote:

¹⁷Letter from Betty Edgerton to Essae M. Culver, August 4, 1953 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

¹⁸Letter from Mrs. L. H. O'Neal to the Louisiana State Library, February 3, 1953 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

It is again most evident that the Louisiana State Library adds much to our program here at Hahnville. . . . the loans we receive from the State Library's regular collection were very helpful. We feel this loan policy is of great benefit to school libraries all over the state. The titles borrowed are usually those wanted only temporarily and a usable central collection prevents much unnecessary duplicate buying. We sincerely appreciate your prompt, helpful service. At every opportunity we shall fully support and encourage any increase in the State Library's funds or facilities.¹⁹

Louisiana Collection

The Louisiana Collection of the State Library was augmented during the years 1951-1955 through the addition of selected materials, including microfilms on Louisiana subjects, in addition to the usual printed sources. A gift of Louisiana documents was made available through the Midwest Inter-Library Center of Chicago, Illinois.²⁰

The material from the Midwest Inter-Library Center was shipped in twenty-three cartons. Inadequate housing prevented the processing of the material, but the documents were assessed as items which will prove invaluable in filling in the files of the State Library and perhaps other libraries of

¹⁹Letter from Margaret Herman to the Louisiana State Library, May 15, 1953 (in Library Interest Correspondence in the Louisiana State Library).

²⁰Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 17.

the state. Plans have been made for the organization of the collection when the State Library is housed in a new building.²¹

Legislative Reference Service

The State Library provided for the Louisiana Legislature in 1952 as follows:

. . . such legislative reference service as its staff, without addition of personnel or special resources, could provide, in accordance with Section 14 of Act 102 of 1946. The L.S.U. Library and the L.S.U. Law Library, as in previous years, each assigned a staff member to cooperate in handling legislative inquiries.²²

The establishment of the Louisiana Legislative Council by Act 51 of 1952 provided legislative reference and bill drafting services for the legislature. The act provided that the resources of the State Library and Louisiana State University should be available to the Council, and the State Library commented:

With the above functions now being carried on, and with the cooperation of the existing agencies, it is believed that the Legislature of Louisiana now had access to real legislative service. Several conferences of the several agencies insure against unnecessary duplication of resources, personnel, and effort in giving this service.²³

²¹Ibid.

²²Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 4.

²³Ibid., p. 5.

Film Service

The film service of the State Library, which was inaugurated in August of 1949, was expanded through additional holdings. Requests for film service increased. With the increased usage of the service, the films of the State Library reached a wider audience of viewers.²⁴

The film collection was increased to 181 titles by the end of the year 1955.²⁵

A sampling of the usage of the film collection indicated that films were used in the parish library promotional activities, the state-wide Citizenship program, the American Heritage Discussion Groups, programs of veterans' organizations, adult study groups, traffic safety studies of teenagers and parents, juvenile delinquency cases of a Family Court, child study programs, and Parent-Teacher activities.²⁶

The film service of the State Library supplied information for individuals and groups on planning film programs, in addition to the circulation of films.²⁷

In the development of film services on a national

²⁴Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 18-19.

²⁵Ibid., p. 18. ²⁶Ibid. ²⁷Ibid., p. 19.

level, the Film Librarian of the Louisiana State Library, Vivian Cazayoux, served on the American Library Association Audio-Visual Board, to which she was appointed in 1953.²⁸

The following statistical summary shows the use made of the film service from 1950 through 1955.²⁹

Year	Requests Received	Films Circulated	No. of Times Films Shown	Total Attendance
1950	858	657	1,465	63,619
1951	2,488	1,819	3,107	127,799
1952	2,356	1,817	2,820	93,697
1953	2,131	1,553	2,667	155,145
1954	2,189	1,536	2,121	77,354
1955	2,867	2,154	2,869	127,390

Service to the Blind

Library service to blind citizens of Louisiana and Mississippi was given financial support in 1951 through the Louisiana State Library. Prior to 1951, the State Library

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 14; and Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 8; and Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 19.

received a number of requests from the New Orleans Public Library, the regional center for library service to the blind, to assume the administration of the service which was started in 1932 with materials for the blind provided by the Federal Government.³⁰

In commenting on the issue of transferring the service to blind citizens from the New Orleans Public Library to the state agency, the State Librarian stated:

The State Library Board recognized the logic of the State Library administering this service, but since no space was available to house the collection, the library was never transferred, and from 1932 until 1951 the New Orleans Public Library served blind citizens in Louisiana and Mississippi.³¹

The Board of the New Orleans Public Library appealed to the Governors of Mississippi and Louisiana, in June of 1951, for assistance in paying the overhead expenses of the service to the blind in the two states. The request for financial assistance was referred to the Louisiana State Library and the Louisiana Division for Blind and Sight Conservation in the Department of Public Welfare.³²

The Louisiana agencies concerned with the service

³⁰Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 10.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

conferred on the matter and prepared a budget which was presented to the Louisiana Board of Liquidation. On September 11, 1951, the Louisiana Board of Liquidation granted \$5,552.31 to the State Library as an initial state fund for library service to the blind.³³

Arrangements were made for the service to be continued at the New Orleans Public Library by a contract, which was approved by the Louisiana Attorney General's Office, until the Louisiana State Library has housing facilities to accommodate the service.³⁴

IV. SPECIAL PROJECTS

The State Library sponsored three special projects, during the years 1951 through 1955, which were planned to stimulate wider and more effective use of public libraries as social intelligence centers in the community. These projects were a Citizenship Program, an American Heritage Discussion Group program, and the Louisiana Reading Festival.

The State Library participated with other state organizations, which were interested in the continuing education of adults, in the first Louisiana Conference on Adult

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid.

Education.

Accounts of these promotional activities appear in the sections to follow.

Citizenship Program

The State Library sponsored a state-wide citizenship program during 1951, to remind citizens of the importance of their basic responsibilities in the processes of government.

In January and February of 1951, the State Library contacted civic-minded individuals and groups throughout Louisiana enlisting participation in a project to arouse greater citizen awareness of individual responsibility in governmental affairs. A kit of materials to be used in promoting the project was prepared and sent to two hundred and fifty persons including heads of local committees, officials of state-wide organizations, public and college librarians, and college presidents.³⁵

Parish librarians assumed the responsibility for directing the Citizenship Program in their respective communities. Representatives of civic clubs agreed to head the program in parishes where there were no established libraries.³⁶

³⁵Nantelle M. Gittinger, "A Library Citizenship Program," Wilson Library Bulletin, 26:548, March, 1952.

³⁶Ibid.

The importance of assuming basic citizenship responsibilities was featured by the press, radio, television, exhibits, films, and on the programs of organizations throughout the State, ranging from a high school student council to a parish-wide forum for adults.³⁷

Eleven thousand persons attended film showings on citizenship during March of 1951, when the project was initiated. Louisiana librarians noted an increase in requests for books and information on citizenship, government, community planning, and the democratic heritage. The demand for materials on citizenship was sustained during the year 1951, as clubs and libraries continued to emphasize the subject.³⁸

Brendon Byrne, Director of the American Heritage Foundation, commended the Louisiana State Library, in a message released on April 7, 1951, for "demonstrating to other libraries, schools, and civic organizations, what can be done in the vital field of civic education."³⁹

The John Cotton Dana award for public relations was presented to the Louisiana State Library by the American Library Association in June of 1952, in recognition of the

³⁷Ibid., pp. 548-549.

³⁸Ibid., p. 549.

³⁹News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), April 7, 1951.

Citizenship Program. The project was described as "a campaign of great public significance in the Dana tradition of aggressive library service to the community."⁴⁰

American Heritage Discussion Project

The State Library promoted the organization of adult discussion groups in the parish libraries of the State during the spring of 1953. In preparation for the group activities, the State Library in cooperation with the Library School and the General Extension Division of Louisiana State University arranged an intensive course for discussion leaders which was held during January of 1953. The course for discussion leaders was given at the Adult Education Center of Louisiana State University by Wesley W. Wiksell, Associate Professor of Speech, a specialist in conference leadership and group discussion techniques.⁴¹

Following the leadership course at Louisiana State University, discussion groups were organized in thirteen parish libraries in the State. The topic of the discussions

⁴⁰News item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), June 27, 1952.

⁴¹Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 6-7.

was, "Heritage of the United States and Its Contemporary Application." The State Library furnished materials for the discussion leaders, including book and film lists, program outlines, discussion guides, exhibits, films, and projection equipment. The State Library also assisted the parish libraries in preparing publicity and supplied materials for use by libraries in securing participants in the discussion groups.⁴²

In reporting the American Heritage Discussion Project, which was directed by Vivian Cazayoux, the State Library commented:

Through this program of discussion in the public library, the men and women, citizens of our communities, were given the opportunity to come together to discuss the problems that confront Americans today in the light of the basic documents, the ideas and experiences which constitute our American heritage. Some of the topics discussed were freedom of speech and of the press, states rights, free enterprise, intellectual freedom and responsibilities of citizenship. Through this discussion the program helped people to become better informed, to become aware of their responsibilities as citizens of a democracy and to be better able to apply their own thinking to building better communities.⁴³

Louisiana Reading Festival

The idea of a Louisiana Reading Festival originated when Essae M. Culver, State Librarian, recommended to the

⁴²Ibid., p. 7.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 7-8.

1954 conference of the Louisiana Library Association "that some dramatic and coordinated attack on the reading indifference of the general public might be profitable."⁴⁴

Members of the Louisiana Library Association immediately expressed an interest in a program to stimulate a wider general interest in reading. The Library School of Louisiana State University offered assistance in arranging for a summer conference to plan a state-wide reading program.⁴⁵

Plans for the state-wide Reading Festival were made during a conference held at Louisiana State University on July 19-24, 1954.⁴⁶

The sponsors of the Reading Festival, which was scheduled for February through April of 1955, included the Louisiana Library Association, the Louisiana Department of Education, the Library School and the Louisiana State Library. The State Library was responsible for directing and coordinating the program throughout the State.⁴⁷

An outline of the plan for the reading festival, with information on the objectives and promotional activities, was

⁴⁴Sallie J. Farrell, "Louisiana Reading Festival, February-April, 1955," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:130, Fall, 1954.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

released in the Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association in the fall of 1954.⁴⁸

Sallie J. Farrell acted as Coordinator of the Louisiana Reading Festival; and the State Library, as the coordinating institution, gave direction and provided materials and personnel to implement the activity.⁴⁹

In reporting on the Reading Festival, to the Louisiana Library Association, Sallie J. Farrell stated:

As coordinating agency of the Festival, which had as its objectives to enrich living through reading and to bring more people to a realization of the joys of reading, the State Library's first big job was preparing kits of materials for Festival use. These kits included: exhibit suggestions, radio spot announcements; newspaper fillers; suggested editorials; mayor's proclamation; suggested news story to use with proclamation; suggested announcements for ministers; quiz on books and authors for club and newspaper use; suggested topics for club, radio, and TV programs; suggested book and film combinations for club use; posters; letterheads; and envelopes. Later the booklist, 'Notable Books for 1954,' and a twenty second movie trailer were mailed to librarians.⁵⁰

Contacts were made with institutions and individuals throughout the State requesting assistance and participation in the project. Letters were written to thirty-one state-wide organizations, one hundred and twenty-five newspaper editors,

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Sallie J. Farrell, "A New Kind of Festival," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 18:147, Fall, 1955.

fifty-six radio station managers, and eight television station managers requesting their participation in the Reading Festival. The public libraries, public schools, colleges, and universities of the State were offered suggestions concerning ways of promoting reading.⁵¹

A Speakers' Bureau was organized by the State Library. Among the persons who contributed their talents as speakers through the Speakers' Bureau were three newspaper men, a priest, two librarians, a former librarian, and a director of the Citizens' Library Movement. The parish librarians, not officially part of the Bureau, spoke before numerous groups during the Festival.⁵²

The Coordinator of the Reading Festival found that it was difficult to assess and evaluate a state-wide program such as the festival. Sixty out of the sixty-four parishes in Louisiana participated in the activity. Twenty-four parish libraries reported increased library usage during the festival over that of the same period one year earlier. Nine colleges and seventy schools reported participation.⁵³ The report of activities stated:

School librarians in the twenty-three parishes in the State without public library service deserve special

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., p. 148.

commendation for not only promoting the Festival in their schools but for reaching out into their communities with plans to make adults more aware of the pleasures of reading.⁵⁴

Librarians, reporting on the local activities of the Reading Festival, sent over two thousand inches of newspaper publicity to the State Library and completed a questionnaire on the outcomes of the project. A summary of the information on the questionnaires revealed that:

28 radio stations used the spots prepared by the State Library.

4 TV stations used the Festival trailer.

27 TV stations took note of the Festival.

51 libraries had special displays.

44 mayors issued proclamations (the Governor did, too!)

143 ministers made announcements about the Festival either from the pulpit or in church bulletins.

1,261 heads of local organizations were contacted about the Festival either by letter or personally.

170 clubs had Festival-inspired programs.

70 clubs made special library visits during the Festival.

58 theaters used the movie trailer.

4 libraries conducted essay contests on 'What Reading Means to Me.'

41 papers used the editorials and 'fillers' prepared by the State Library.

279 Festival stories carried by newspapers.⁵⁵

The answers from the participating librarians indicated that they considered the project generally successful and worth the extra time and effort expended on the activities

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 147.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 148-149.

involved. The following statements were made:

The Reading Festival has done more to focus attention on the library and library service than any other project.

People who had not been in the library for years came during the Festival.

The prestige value of the Festival was enormous.

The Festival served to call attention to the library. It brought new borrowers and caused those who were already using the library to come more often.

I feel that the publicity developed during the Reading Festival will have a long range effect. I consider the program a complete success.⁵⁶

The Coordinator of the Reading Festival concluded that "it all added up to an effective program leading many Louisianians to discover and rediscover 'the wonderful world of books.'"⁵⁷

Adult Education

The State Librarian, Essae M. Culver, recognizing the responsibilities of libraries in fostering the continuing education of adults and in an effort to bring about a more complete and better coordinated program of adult education activities in Louisiana, arranged a conference of representatives of interested agencies on November 21, 1953.⁵⁸

Attending the meeting were: Dr. Nicholas P. Mitchell,

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 149.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 3.

President of the SEAEA (Southeastern Adult Education Association) and Associate Editor of the Greenville, S. C. News, Dr. James E. Arnold, University of Tennessee, and Dr. Andrew Hendrickson, Ohio State University, from outside of Louisiana, and representatives of 30 state agencies concerned with Adult Education programs.⁵⁹

The conference was considered the initial step in activities which were planned to develop interest in a state organization to promote a more complete and coordinated adult education program for Louisiana.⁶⁰

Further developments in the cooperative endeavors of agencies concerned with Adult Education resulted in a meeting on February 18 and 19, 1955. A report on the conference stated:

. . . more than one hundred persons representing some fifty organizations, institutions and agencies gathered at Louisiana State University for the first Louisiana Conference on Adult Education. The purpose of the conference which was sponsored by the University with the cooperation of a number of state-wide agencies and organizations . . . was to provide for the exchange of information about the various adult education programs in the state and to establish cooperation among groups sponsoring these programs.⁶¹

The Louisiana State Library cooperated in the sponsorship of the conference. Vivian Cazayoux of the staff of the

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Vivian Cazayoux, "First Louisiana Conference on Adult Education," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 18:52-53, Spring, 1955.

State Library served as Chairman of the Louisiana Adult Education Steering Committee, which was charged with the responsibility of planning the conference.⁶²

Robert A. Luke of the Division of Adult Education of the National Education Association, as a guest speaker for the conference, commented on the role of the Louisiana State Library in adult education as follows:

Once adult education is thought of as problem solving, then all kinds of activities involving adults can be included as adult education. . . . One of the most spectacular endeavors of this kind of adult education is the demonstration program of the Louisiana State Library. As you know Miss Culver is one of the country's distinguished librarians, and whenever good library service is discussed Louisiana is mentioned.⁶³

The participants in the conference recognized the need for cooperation among the organizations and agencies involved in programs of adult education. The Steering Committee, headed by Vivian Cazayoux, was requested to continue to work with representatives of all agencies concerned with adult education and to plan for another conference.⁶⁴

⁶²Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 19.

⁶³Cazayoux, op. cit., p. 54.

⁶⁴Ibid.

V. EXTENSION DEPARTMENT

The activities of the Extension Department were continued under the direction of Mary W. Harris from 1951 until her retirement on July 1, 1954.⁶⁵

Prior to the retirement of Mary W. Harris as Director of the Extension Department, the department provided advisory services for established libraries and gave direction and supervision to the demonstration libraries being conducted by the State Library. The organization, processing, and preparation of the records for use in the demonstration libraries were handled by the Extension Department.⁶⁶

A reorganization of the work of the Extension Department occurred following the retirement of Mary W. Harris, when Lois F. Shortess was named as Head of the Extension Department, and the field services of the State Library were coordinated under the direction of Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative, in the Administrative Department.⁶⁷

The Extension Department, after July 1, 1954, carried on the work of selecting, ordering, processing, and cataloging

⁶⁵Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 20.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

books for the demonstration libraries, and prepared records, arranged shipments, and stocked the bookmobile for use in the demonstration libraries. The Extension Department also handled details of receiving, sorting, and reprocessing books returned to the department by parish libraries.⁶⁸

Library service to Negroes was continued by the State Library under the supervision of the Extension Department. An account of this service during the years 1951-1955 follows.

Service to Negroes

A state-wide reference and loan service for Negroes was continued by the State Library from the Negro Branch, located at Southern University in quarters made available by the university. The State Library report on the service through the year 1955 stated, "We continue to be indebted to Southern University for housing the branch until the State Library will have room for it in a building of its own."⁶⁹

Norma W. Humphrey became the librarian in charge of the Negro Branch in September of 1951, following the resignation of Adele M. Jackson. The service was continued through 1955 with no change in personnel.⁷⁰

In addition to handling the services of the Negro

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid., p. 22.

⁷⁰Ibid.

Branch, it was reported that:

. . . the librarian spent a good deal of time in field work. . . . She contacted groups and individuals trying to stimulate interest in books and reading to increase use of both the State Library Negro Branch and the Negro branches of the parish libraries. She also visited Negro branches (of parish libraries) making an effort to help the untrained branch assistants with their problems.⁷¹

The field services of the librarian in charge of the Negro Branch included a wide range of activities including:

(1) Guest speaker for Book Week program in a high school; (2) assisted an elementary school in working out a Book Bazaar for Book Week; (3) served as consultant at a career day held at Grambling College, attended by students from ten colleges and thirty high schools from Louisiana, Texas, and Arkansas; (4) presented a film-forum discussion at the Leadership Conference held at Southern University, attended by Negro leaders from all over the State; (5) talked to Southern University faculty members at their Pre-School Conference; (6) at the invitation of Mr. L. L. Kilgore, supervisor of Negro schools, State Department of Education, served as a member of the visiting committees to the Walter L. Cohen High School, New Orleans and the Webster High School, Minden, to review the self evaluation programs by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools; (7) attended the openings of the two Negro branches in the . . . St. Martin Parish Library Demonstration; (8) travelled on the bookmobile in the St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration, visiting schools, clubs, organizations and key citizens explaining the service to the Negro citizens.⁷²

The following table shows the growth and use of the

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 22-23.

⁷²Ibid., p. 23.

Negro Branch during the years 1951 through 1955.⁷³

Year	Book Collection	Number of Registered Borrowers	Branch Circulation
1951	4,845	1,496	7,238
1952	5,197	1,719	7,933
1953	5,506	1,858	7,681
1954	5,973	2,047	8,650
1955	6,246	2,211	8,778

The Extension Department gave leadership during the years 1951-1955 to annual conferences for the persons in charge of the Negro branches of the parish libraries. Southern University cooperated in the in-service educational activities by providing meeting rooms and living accommodations on the campus for participants, and engaging an instructor for the conferences.⁷⁴

Each year there were lectures, classes, and problems on the use of simple reference books, the Dewey decimal classification and arrangement of books in a library, circulation, promotion of books and reading, etc. . . . Guest speakers were featured each year.⁷⁵

⁷³Ibid., p. 22; and Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 18. Also see Appendix, Table II on the Growth and Use of the Negro Branch of the Louisiana State Library, p. 456.

⁷⁴Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 24.

⁷⁵Ibid.

VI. ON THE RETIREMENT OF MARY WALTON HARRIS

The Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library stated:

The Extension Department suffered an irreparable loss on July 1, 1954, when Miss Mary Walton Harris, Director, retired. Her service with the Louisiana State Library (then the Louisiana Library Commission) started in 1925, six months after its opening. Miss Harris since then . . . served in various capacities with the State Library, and also as librarian for Webster Parish Library.⁷⁶

Mary W. Harris, a Southerner by birth, gained her library experience in California. She served as Assistant Secretary of the Louisiana Library Commission from the time of her appointment to the staff of the Commission in 1925 until she returned to California briefly in 1929. She re-joined the staff of the Louisiana Library Commission and assumed the duties of Librarian of the Webster Parish Library Demonstration in October of 1929. She continued as librarian of the Webster Parish Library until 1937 when she was placed in charge of the Tri-Parish Library, a state-planned demonstration.⁷⁷

Mary Walton Harris was named Director of the Extension Department of the Library Commission in 1938. A report

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 20.

⁷⁷Sarah I. Jones, "Extension Department," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 13:53, Spring, 1950.

on the Extension Department stated:

When she took charge of the Extension Department it was on the basement floor of the new state Capitol, with six employees who immediately plunged into selecting and processing book collections for demonstration libraries, preparing a manual of operating procedures for parishes, and generally assisting local libraries of the whole State with practical advice on usual and unusual library problems.⁷⁸

A tribute to Mary Walton Harris, as one of the first ladies of librarianship in Louisiana, was written on the occasion of her retirement by Marion Taylor, who succeeded Mary W. Harris as librarian of the Webster Parish Library. The word portrait of Mary W. Harris highlighted the abilities, personal qualifications, and professional accomplishments of the Director of the Extension Department of the State Library, who helped provide a sound basic structure for parish library development and contributed to the effective administration of the parish libraries in the years following the period of the demonstrations, when the institutions were no longer under the direct supervision of the State Library.⁷⁹

Louisiana libraries and librarianship benefited from the administrative leadership of Mary W. Harris. The profession recognized that the fine reading background of the

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Marion Taylor, "Mary Walton Harris," Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association, 17:132-133, Fall, 1954.

keen, aggressive mind of Mary Harris, and her ever alert appreciation of what books can do for people, made her approach fresh and stimulating and established an ideal and "faith that the library will continue its worthy tradition in the future."⁸⁰

VII. DEMONSTRATIONS

During the years 1951 through 1955, demonstration libraries were conducted by the State Library in St. Tammany, Franklin, Claiborne, Iberville, Tensas, LaSalle, Caldwell, St. Mary, East Carroll, St. Martin, and St. Charles parishes.

A record of the St. Tammany Parish Library Demonstration is included in Chapter VI. of this study, since the demonstration began in June of 1950.

Accounts of the demonstrations in Franklin, Claiborne, Iberville, Tensas, LaSalle, Caldwell, St. Mary, East Carroll, St. Martin, and St. Charles parishes are presented in the sections to follow.

Franklin Parish Library Demonstration

The opening of the Franklin Parish Library Demonstration on December 11, 1950 marked the culmination of fifteen

⁸⁰Ibid., p. 133.

years of effort on the part of the library-minded citizens of this agricultural parish, located in the northeastern section of Louisiana.⁸¹

Interest in securing a library in Franklin Parish started in the period of 1935-1939, when the neighboring parish, Morehouse, was working to secure a demonstration of library service from the Library Commission.⁸²

The movement to secure a library for Franklin Parish was accelerated in 1946-1947, when Sadie Shipp became president of the Winnsboro Parent-Teacher Association and a special committee was appointed, with the primary objective of the committee being "to interest citizens and the parish Police Jury in a parish-wide library to the extent of getting the governing body to pass an ordinance establishing a parish library. . . ."⁸³

After some promotional activities and a conference with the Field Representative of the State Library, Sallie J. Farrell, the library committee presented their request for a parish library to the Police Jury on December 3, 1946, and

⁸¹Eunice E. Heitman, "Franklin Parish Library Demonstration, December, 1950-December, 1951" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1952), p. (1).

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid.

the ordinance establishing the Franklin Parish Library was duly passed by the governing body.⁸⁴

The Board of Control of the Library was appointed including: Mrs. George V. Cotton, Mrs. C. W. Sherrouse, Mrs. V. A. Caldwell, Mrs. H. A. Buie, and Mrs. C. R. Adams.⁸⁵

When the State Library was prepared to make local arrangements for the Franklin Parish Library Demonstration in the spring of 1950, a representative of the State Library presented a tentative budget covering the expenses of the project to the Police Jury. The Police Jury requested that the State Library delay the plans for the opening of the demonstration in Franklin Parish, because they were not able to provide the local appropriation which was required.⁸⁶

On learning that the demonstration library was postponed because of the lack of local funds, the civic and educational leaders of the community decided that local action would be taken when the State Library presented the question again. A report on the issue stated:

Time approached for the State Library to begin another demonstration. As promised, a representative again visited Franklin. A budget of \$5,500.00 was presented as the minimum appropriation. The Jury shook their heads. Financial conditions were much the

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 2.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid., p. 3.

same as when they had been approached before. After much deliberation, an appropriation of \$2,500.00 was approved. Mrs. Adams (member of the Library Board) pleaded for the chance to make a house to house canvass to make up the difference. Reluctantly this never-before-attempted method of financing a demonstration locally was agreed upon.⁸⁷

The campaign for library support brought a total of \$3,106.11. An additional contribution of \$12.00 which was donated following the campaign brought the local fund to a total of \$5,618.11.⁸⁸

After the financial problems were solved, the State Library started the preliminary arrangements for the demonstration. Eunice Heitman, a professionally trained librarian with administrative experience in the Catahoula Parish Library, was appointed by the State Library to head the demonstration.⁸⁹

The location of housing proved a problem. After much effort on the part of local and state officials, quarters for the headquarters library were provided in a building on the grounds of the Winnsboro Trade School. A branch to give library service to Negroes was located in Winnsboro. A branch was established in Wisner. Plans were made for bookmobile service.⁹⁰

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 4.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 5.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 5-7.

⁹⁰Ibid., pp. 7-10.

The Franklin Parish Library Demonstration, which was officially opened on December 11, 1950, faced numerous difficulties, and the State Library reported:

The library was handicapped by a poor headquarters location which had its effect on use made by Winnsboro people. A new court house was under construction and all parish offices spread over the town, leaving no suitable place for the library. All streets in the town were being paved at the same time which made driving and even walking difficult.⁹¹

During the period of demonstration, the library registered 4,011 borrowers and circulated 51,494 volumes, from a collection of 9,515 volumes.⁹²

Five months after the opening of the library demonstration, a special library tax of two and one-half mills for five years was voted. The results of the election, which was held on May 8, 1951, were 234 popular votes, representing \$838,835.00 in assessed property valuation voted for the tax with 83 popular votes, representing \$296,080.00 in assessed property valuation, voted against the library tax.⁹³

The demonstration library was conducted at a cost of \$5,618.11 to the local authorities, while the State Li-

⁹¹Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 19.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid.

brary expended \$31,537.74 on the project, exclusive of the cost of supervisory services and the processing of the collection.⁹⁴

Claiborne Parish Library Demonstration

The interest in public library development in Claiborne Parish was an outgrowth of the general attitude toward education. The citizens of Claiborne Parish began an organized effort to improve educational opportunities in the parish as early as 1850, when emphasis on public education started a school program which culminated in a general awareness of the value of education and "made Claiborne one of the outstanding parishes in the State in the development of educational facilities."⁹⁵

The library movement started in Homer in 1929, when a municipal library was opened and supported through the cooperative efforts of the Woman's Department Club, the Homer Town Council, and the Claiborne Parish Police Jury.⁹⁶

⁹⁴See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

⁹⁵Doris Lessel, "Claiborne Parish Library Demonstration, 1951-1952" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1953), p. (1).

⁹⁶Ibid., p. 2.

W. F. M. Meadors, Jr., a civic-minded attorney, was encouraged by the citizens of Homer and the Study Club of Haynesville to make a formal request to the Police Jury for the establishment of a parish library, and the Claiborne Parish Library was duly established by action of the Police Jury on March 5, 1947.⁹⁷

A request for a one year demonstration of library service was made to the State Library. In February of 1951, arrangements were made to initiate the Claiborne Parish Library Demonstration. At a meeting of the Police Jury in February of 1951, the Board of Control of the Library was named, including: Joe W. Webb of Haynesville, Beth Tatum of Homer, Nedra McDonald of Lisbon, Ruth Baker of Route 1, Acadia; and H. H. Watkins, President of the Police Jury became a member, ex-officio.⁹⁸

The library demonstration was organized under the direction and supervision of the Extension Department of the State Library, with a professionally trained librarian, Doris Lessel, in charge of the parish library. Distribution centers were located at Homer and Haynesville, and the book-mobile served the rural sections of the parish.⁹⁹

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 3.

⁹⁹Ibid., p. 6.

The formal opening ceremonies of the Claiborne Parish Library were held on March 31, 1951, with H. H. Watkins, President of the Police Jury, presiding. Tribute was paid to the Homer Public Library, which had served the community and which was now to be merged with the new parish library, to provide an enlarged professional library program for the parish. Watkins explained the conditions involved in securing the library demonstration. He emphasized the tax election which would give the citizens an opportunity to express their wishes concerning the continuation of the library at the close of the demonstration year, when the support of the State Library was scheduled to be terminated.¹⁰⁰

Throughout the period of the demonstration, the public relations program of the library emphasized the local responsibility for providing support for the library following the one-year demonstration.¹⁰¹

The services of the library were publicized through newspaper articles, talks to clubs and civic organizations, and in various special promotional activities. The special promotional activities included a Ballot Box Reading Club and weekly story hour for children; an exhibit of books

¹⁰⁰Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁰¹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

recommended in the study of human relations; the celebration of National Library Day, by a book character parade in the Claiborne Parish Fair; an illustrated lecture on birds by Lois J. Lester of the Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library; and a publishers' exhibit of books for children.¹⁰²

The continuation of the Claiborne Parish Library as a locally supported institution was assured by the voters in the tax election on February 5, 1952. There were 456 popular votes, representing \$1,353,407.24 in property assessments, cast for a one and three quarters mills library tax for five years; and 164 popular votes, representing \$591,642.95 in property assessment, were cast against the library tax.¹⁰³

The statistical records of the Claiborne Parish Library Demonstration showed that 77,765 volumes were circulated to 3,332 registered borrowers. The cost of the demonstration amounted to \$9,429.00 for the local authorities, with the State Library expenditure totaling \$31,186.11, exclusive of the expenses of the Extension Department in providing supervision and securing and processing the

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 9.

book collection.¹⁰⁴

Iberville Parish Library Demonstration

The faithful and sustained efforts of the Iberville Library Association Board, from 1927 until 1951, kept alive a small city library in Plaquemine and gave leadership to the movement to secure a parish library and a demonstration of library service by the Louisiana State Library.¹⁰⁵

On May 13, 1947, the Police Jury passed unanimously an ordinance of establishment and asked the State Library to come into Iberville Parish for a year to give the people an opportunity to see what a library could do for them. Four years later in May of 1951, when the State Library was prepared to initiate the demonstration, the Police Jury appropriated \$9,500.00 for local support of the project.¹⁰⁶

The members of the Board of Control of the library who were appointed by the Police Jury included: J. Allen

¹⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 12-15. Also see Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹⁰⁵Kay Werner, "Iberville Parish Library Demonstration, 1951-1952" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1953), pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., p. 6.

Nadler, president; Helen H. Richard, vice-president; and Thelma M. Row, Allison J. Barbier, Austin D. Barbay, with H. M. Kimball, president of the Police Jury, a member ex-officio.¹⁰⁷

Distribution centers of the library were located in Plaquemine, where the headquarters library and a branch for Negroes were located, and a branch was established in White Castle. A bookmobile was provided to serve the smaller communities and the rural sections of the parish.¹⁰⁸

The formal opening of the Iberville Parish Library Demonstration occurred on September 20, 1951, when in spite of rain all day and during the ceremonies, many friends of the library attended the program. Harriet S. Daggett, Chairman of the State Library Board, presided at the program, and among those in attendance were parish and state officials and civic leaders who spoke in favor of the demonstration. L. P. Terrebonne, the Superintendent of the Iberville Parish Schools, stated that the sections of our country having the best educated people also have the highest living standards, and he concluded that the library was

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., pp. 9-13.

another step forward for education in Iberville Parish.¹⁰⁹

The demonstration library was under the supervision of the Extension Department of the State Library, with a professionally trained librarian, Kay Werner, in charge of the parish services. The local staff members were given a brief course in library procedures by the parish librarian, prior to the opening of the demonstration.¹¹⁰

The branch and bookmobile service of the library were well received by the local citizens. As the bookmobile travelled regularly over four routes, the circulation increased and people became familiar with the services. During the demonstration year, the bookmobile registered 1,063 patrons and issued 21,085 volumes at thirty-nine stops on the routes.¹¹¹

Kay Werner, the librarian of the Iberville Parish Library Demonstration, stated concerning the users of the bookmobile:

Statistics are often dull; and though thought provoking, they do not always tell the whole story. People, themselves, make this part of parish library work very interesting . . . the school children at the Samston School on Bayou Goula are delightful

¹⁰⁹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 10.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 11-13.

. . . the old colored man who came to the bookmobile in Maringouin and wanted a Bible, and old Mr. Smith who lives in a trailer down on Bayou Sorrel, who said he would like to have the National Geographic and the Reader's Digest He added that he wasn't interested in all this bother and trouble being written about now, that he wasn't much longer for this world and wanted to read something about God's world and nature. . . .

Mrs. Denham, a naturalized citizen now, but formerly a refugee from Poland . . . reads such things as The Nature of the Universe, by Hoyle, The Art of Driftwood and Dried Arrangements, by Ishimoto . . . You and Atomic Energy and Its Wonderful Uses, by Llewellen. . . .¹¹²

In tribute to the people who cooperated in developing the service the librarian commented:

Without the cooperation of everyone, our Bookmobile service could have been most haphazard in growth; however, through the fine spirit of cooperation from the school faculties, the Home Demonstration Council and its individual clubs and through individuals in the community where the Bookmobile visits, we have enjoyed a fine beginning.¹¹³

The promotional activities of the Iberville Parish Library Demonstration included, talks at meetings of social and civic clubs, visits to schools, the presentation of book reviews and bibliographies to the AMVETS, Rotary Club, Plaquemine Recreation Commission, the Daily Vacation Bible School, film showings, story hours, summer reading clubs, newspaper publicity, and a special exhibit of the prize

¹¹²Ibid., p. 14.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 15.

winning photographs made by members of the Camera Club.¹¹⁴

During the entire demonstration emphasis was placed on the local responsibility for providing support for the library after the period of the demonstration. When the tax election, on the proposition of the library tax of two mills for ten years, was scheduled for October 28, 1952, a campaign was initiated to give information on the election. The publicity program included newspaper stories, the distribution of a mimeographed sheet covering the facts and figures related to the financial needs and the services of the library, and personal contacts to assure the continuation of the library.¹¹⁵

The librarian reported:

We were much encouraged by everyone and therefore not too worried by the outcome of the election; however, we were very glad when the returns started coming in at the end of the day on Tuesday, October 28, and we could tell that the proposition had been received favorably.¹¹⁶

The results of the election revealed that 364 popular votes were cast for the library tax, representing an assessed property valuation of \$959,543.00; and only 24 popular votes were cast against the election, representing \$28,789.00 in

¹¹⁴Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹¹⁵Ibid., pp. 23-24.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 24.

property assessments.¹¹⁷

During the period of the demonstration, the Iberville Parish Library registered 3,473 borrowers and circulated 66,900 volumes.¹¹⁸

The Iberville Parish Police Jury provided \$9,805.20 to cover the local expenses of the demonstration; and the State Library expended \$31,427.74 on the project, exclusive of the cost of the procurement and processing of the collection and the expenses and salaries of the field representatives engaged in the supervision of the demonstration.¹¹⁹

Tensas Parish Library Demonstration

The Tensas Parish Library Demonstration was organized to serve an agricultural section of the State, having a population of 13,209 inhabitants, bounded on the eastern side by the Mississippi River. The plans for the demonstration were made in accordance with the established policies of the State Library, and the demonstration was formally opened on January 22, 1952.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 11.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State

In organizing the library, arrangements were made to serve the inhabitants from the headquarters and branch library in St. Joseph, the parish seat; a bookmobile; and a branch for the Negro residents, located in St. Joseph in a convenient lodge building easy of access to Negro residents. The headquarters office and branch of the demonstration were located in a building in the business section of St. Joseph.¹²¹

The library program was publicized through displays, exhibits, press releases, and personal contacts of the librarian, Mary Louise Giraud, and the members of the library board, including: Mrs. Philip Watson, J. C. Seaman, Mrs. W. W. Burnside, Mrs. David Miller, and Mrs. Caster Causey.¹²²

The library provided special services to organized groups in the community, including providing materials for a study group on Child Psychology; informational material for the Girl Scouts; program sources for the Parent-Teacher Association; and references for the Little Theater.¹²³

Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953
(Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 11.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Mary Louise Giraud, "Tensas Parish Library Demonstration, January, 1952" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1952), pp. 4-5.

¹²³Mary Louise Giraud, "Tensas Parish Library Demonstration, November, 1952" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1952), p. (1).

Six months after the service was initiated, the Police Jury called a tax election for a 2-1/2 mills tax for five years to provide for supporting the library at the close of the demonstration. On July 29, 1952 the tax passed with a total of 203 popular votes, representing \$911,906.00 in property assessment, cast for the library tax, and there were 78 votes, representing \$587,738.00 in assessed valuation of property, cast against the tax.¹²⁴

The statistical records of the demonstration show that the library registered 1,916 borrowers and circulated 41,926 volumes. The project was executed at a cost of \$6,000.00 for the local authorities, while the State Library expended \$26,903.51 on the demonstration, exclusive of the cost of procuring and processing the book collection and the cost of travel and supervision of the demonstration.¹²⁵

LaSalle Parish Library Demonstration

An awareness of the need for parish library service was expressed in LaSalle Parish as early as 1935 by civic

¹²⁴Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 11-12.

¹²⁵Ibid., p. 12.

clubs, school officials, the Parent-Teacher Association, the churches, the press, the Department of Public Welfare, the Jena Chamber of Commerce and the Olla Chamber of Commerce.¹²⁶

In response to the local interest in the institution, the Police Jury of LaSalle Parish passed an ordinance establishing the LaSalle Parish Library on September 6, 1947, and a request for a one-year demonstration of library service was made to the State Library.¹²⁷

When the State Library notified the officials of LaSalle Parish that the demonstration of library service could be initiated in 1952, the Police Jury did not have the funds available to provide the local support for the demonstration library. The Police Jury decided to call a tax election on June 5, 1952 to secure a tax of two mills for three years to support and maintain the parish library. The tax was passed, and LaSalle became the first parish in Louisiana to pass a tax to support a library before a demonstration of library service was conducted by the State Library.¹²⁸

The results of the tax election showed 149 popular

¹²⁶Lola Cooper, "LaSalle Parish Library Demonstration, 1952-1953" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1954), p. 4.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Ibid., pp. 4-5.

votes for the tax, representing property assessments amounting to \$199,030.00, and 67 popular votes against the tax, representing \$142,207.00 in property assessments.¹²⁹

The LaSalle Parish Library Board of Control was appointed by the Police Jury. The members of the Board who served during the demonstration period of 1952-1953 included: Milton Hudnall, president; M. A. Tannehill, vice-president; Nick Medica, treasurer; Jim Anderson; Bob Owens; and Lloyd Thompson, president of the Police Jury, a member ex-officio.¹³⁰

Preparations for the library demonstration were made by the Extension Department of the State Library. Rubie M. Hanks, the administrative librarian of the Winn and Catahoula parish libraries, served as head of the LaSalle Parish Library Demonstration for three months prior to the opening of the project and for the first six months of the operation of the LaSalle Parish Library Demonstration.¹³¹

On October 25, 1952, ceremonies officially opening the demonstration were held at the Jena Branch and Headquarters Library building and at the Olla Branch. On October 26, 1952,

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 5.

¹³⁰Ibid., p. 6.

¹³¹Ibid., pp. 5-9.

a dedication program was presented in the Webb Branch Library for Negroes in Jena.¹³²

The bookmobile service in LaSalle parish was popular from the time the service was started on November 4, 1952. The bookmobile stops and routes were extended with the increased demand for the service. Direct service was given to all the schools in the parish except in Jena and Olla where the branch libraries were accessible to the children. During the one-year demonstration, the bookmobile circulated 43,393 volumes to 1,197 registered borrowers.¹³³

The Webb Branch for Negroes was housed in a new building, and one thousand books were provided in the initial book collection. The use of the collection was promoted by the library assistant who contacted the Negro schools and gave information about the library, arranged story hours for children, and organized a book club for adults.¹³⁴

The promotional activities of the LaSalle Parish Library Demonstration included newspaper stories; talks to thirty-eight organizations, including service clubs, civic clubs, P.T.A. groups, church groups, and Home Demonstration

¹³²Ibid., pp. 6-7.

¹³³Ibid., pp. 11-13.

¹³⁴Ibid., pp. 14-15.

Clubs; exhibits and posters in the library and in downtown store windows, and at the parish and district fairs; book-lists; newsletters; folders on the bookmobile services and routes; and an American Heritage Discussion Group.¹³⁵

During the period of the demonstration, the library registered 2,945 borrowers and circulated 72,262 volumes.¹³⁶

Since the people of LaSalle parish had passed a tax to support the library prior to the opening of the demonstration, the continued support of the library was assured; and the Board of Control of the library concentrated during the culminating period of the demonstration on making plans to enlarge the facilities of the library and strengthen the services, in order to reach more readers and make the library an increasingly effective institution in the community.¹³⁷

The cost of the demonstration of library service to the LaSalle Parish authorities amounted to \$9,964.85. The State Library expended \$22,992.62 on the project, exclusive of the salaries of the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the demonstration.¹³⁸

¹³⁵Ibid., pp. 15-17.

¹³⁶Ibid., pp. 20-24.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 19.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 32.

Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration

The Caldwell Parish Library was established by an ordinance passed by the Police Jury on March 1, 1949. Among the citizens who worked for the establishment of the library were:

Dr. W. M. Causey, physician of Columbia who had spearheaded the library movement through the Kiwanis Club; David Gartman, Kiwanian and automobile dealer; Wayne Brockner, Lion, oil and gas station operator; Edgar Duke, Assessor and member of the Lion's Club; Miss Lola Caldwell, Home Demonstration Agent; Mrs. Ellis, Home Demonstration Club member . . . Mrs. O. N. Reynolds; Jimmy Gregory, President of Kiwanis Club; Rev. Holladay, pastor of the Methodist Church in Columbia; Mrs. Guy Alford, Mayor of Columbia; . . . Mr. R. L. Gardner, local druggist and member of Kiwanis Club; Mr. R. G. Gaygent of the Citizens' Bank. . . .¹³⁹

The Board of Control of the Caldwell Parish Library was named by the Police Jury, including Wren M. Causey, Mrs. O. N. Reynolds, K. R. Russell, A. C. Banks, and Lucille Wooldridge.¹⁴⁰

The initial plans for the Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration were made by Kathryn Adams of the field staff of the State Library, and Rubie M. Hanks, the administrative librarian of the Winn Parish Library, who was

¹³⁹Rubie M. Hanks, "Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration, September 15, 1953" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, October 5, 1953), p. (1).

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

employed to initiate the demonstration in Caldwell Parish.¹⁴¹

Some difficulty was encountered in making the local arrangements for the demonstration, but in spite of the difficulties, the Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration was opened on July 18, 1953, with James L. Love, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library, presiding at the opening ceremonies.¹⁴²

Library service was provided for the parish through the Columbia Branch and Headquarters library, the W. W. Brown Branch to serve Negroes, and the bookmobile.¹⁴³

A public relations program was organized to present information about the library and its services to representative groups in the parish, including, church organizations, the Lion's Club, Caldwell Wild Life Association and the Home Demonstration Clubs.¹⁴⁴

When Rubie M. Hanks resigned as Director of the Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration to return to her duties in the Winn Parish Library on September 15, 1953, the Assistant Librarian, Vera Jane Godown, a college graduate with a major in Library Science and experience in regional library

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 7.

¹⁴³Ibid., pp. 2-7.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 7.

work, became Acting Librarian of the Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration.¹⁴⁵

Bookmobile services were accelerated after the opening of the schools in September. The Acting Librarian reported:

Arrangements were made beforehand with each school principal for a time and system of giving schools library service. . . . Before the initial visit to the school, each room was visited by the librarian, the demonstration explained, and application cards given out to be signed before checking out books.

There was much enthusiasm from the pupils, but a lukewarm attitude from the teachers. It is gratifying to note that at the end of the school year, nearly three-fourths of the teachers were coming to the librarian and saying, 'Be sure that my pupils read this summer. The library has done so much for them.'¹⁴⁶

Comments on service to adults indicated that:

The number of adult readers increased considerably through the year. Home demonstration clubs were visited by the librarian to acquaint the women with types of books available and to gain information about prospective readers. When the new yearbooks for the clubs were made out, points for reading were included in the list of requirements. The club-women were instrumental in putting over the library. Time and again, men were heard to say, 'I don't read myself, but I've got to vote for the library or my wife won't ever forgive me.'

.
The most popular books among the women were books on cooking, sewing, crocheting, freezing, and religion,

¹⁴⁵Kathryn Adams, "Caldwell Parish Library Demonstration, Supplementary report, 1954" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1954), p. (1).

¹⁴⁶Vera Jane Godown, "Caldwell Parish Library, Report of Demonstration" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, 1954), p. 2.

and light fiction. The men naturally requested westerns more than any other type, but even after one year, the trend is changing to books which will help them in their work, such as livestock, pastures, electricity, radio repair, and farming.¹⁴⁷

The tax election to vote on a three and one-half mills property tax for five years to provide local support for the Caldwell Parish Library after the period of the demonstration was called for April 13, 1954. A campaign to stress the need for continuing the parish library was made through the press, radio, films, and personal contacts.¹⁴⁸

The continuation of the library was assured by the election returns which recorded 342 popular votes for the library tax, representing \$502,354.00 in property assessment voted for the tax, and 55 popular votes against the tax, representing \$58,510.00 in assessed valuation of property voted against the tax.¹⁴⁹

During the period of the demonstration, the library registered 2,708 borrowers and circulated 83,017 volumes.¹⁵⁰

The cost of the demonstration to the local agencies amounted to a total of \$7,057.63, including contributions of

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 9-10.

¹⁴⁹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 5.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

of the Lions' Club, Kiwanis Club, and the Columbia Town Council, in addition to a \$6,000.00 appropriation of the Police Jury. The State Library expended \$28,571.18 on the demonstration, exclusive of the cost of processing the book collection and supervision of the project.¹⁵¹

St. Mary Parish Library Demonstration

Citizen interest in library development was expressed in St. Mary Parish in 1926, when support for a state library agency was found in Morgan City. In 1934 a public library was founded in Morgan City, and a library was started in Franklin in June of 1935.¹⁵²

A number of the citizens of the parish recognized the need for having a library to serve the entire parish. In 1947 interest in the establishment of a demonstration library was intensified in St. Mary Parish. Listed among the citizens who worked for the establishment of a parish library were:

Miss Lela King, Miss Cora Hebert, Mrs. Emile

¹⁵¹See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹⁵²Ann Kersieck, "St. Mary Parish Library Demonstration, 1953-1954" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1954), pp. 2-3.

Lehman, Miss Elizabeth Pharr of Morgan City; Mrs. Lena de Grummond, whose home was originally Centerville; Mr. and Mrs. Rene H. Himel, Mr. and Mrs. John Caffery, Mrs. Elizabeth T. Bell, Mrs. L. C. Kramer, and Miss Lorena O'Neill of Franklin.¹⁵³

The St. Mary Parish Library was established by an ordinance adopted by the Police Jury on April 13, 1949; and when the State Library was prepared to organize the demonstration in 1953, "the St. Mary Parish Police Jury appropriated a sum not to exceed \$10,000.00 to take care of the local overhead expenses of the St. Mary Library Demonstration."¹⁵⁴

In making the preliminary arrangements for the library demonstration, Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative of the Louisiana State Library, contacted officials of various communities in the parish concerning the organization of the service, and the officials of Morgan City voted against the participation in the parish-wide library demonstration. The demonstration library was, therefore, planned to serve the 26,089 inhabitants of St. Mary Parish who were not residents of Morgan City.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁵⁴Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁵⁵Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 6.

The St. Mary Parish Library demonstration was officially opened on October 25, 1953. The library staff was headed by a professionally trained librarian, Ann Kersieck, with Mary Ellen Tilley, also a professionally trained librarian, assuming the duties of librarian upon her resignation in July of 1954. Library service was provided through distribution centers in Franklin, Berwick, the Bunche Branch for Negroes, and the bookmobile.¹⁵⁶

Promotional activities featuring the program of the library included newspaper publicity, talks to groups, personal contacts of the staff and the board, mimeographed announcements and booklists, a contest to name the bookmobile, and a summer reading contest.¹⁵⁷

Special publicity on the library and personal contacts to inform the taxpayers preceded the tax election which was scheduled for June 18, 1954, to secure support for the library following the demonstration.¹⁵⁸

The citizens of St. Mary Parish voted for a two mills tax for ten years to continue the parish library services. The results of the election were 365 popular votes for the

¹⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 3-7.

¹⁵⁷Ibid., in Publicity Appended.

¹⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 9-13.

library tax, representing \$1,808,934.00 in property assessment voted for the tax, and 74 popular votes against the library tax, representing \$309,433.00 voted in property assessment against the library tax.¹⁵⁹

During the period of the demonstration, the library registered 3,249 borrowers and circulated 67,835 volumes, from a book collection of 9,501 volumes.¹⁶⁰

The cost of the demonstration to the local authorities amounted to \$12,929.00. The State Library expended \$34,451.71 on the project, exclusive of the costs of supervision and book processing.¹⁶¹

East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration

The East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration was organized to serve a small northeastern Louisiana parish with a total population of 16,302 of which 9,936 were Negroes.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 5.

¹⁶⁰Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁶¹Ibid. See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

¹⁶²Elizabeth Cammack, "East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration, 1954-1955" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1955), p. (1).

Farming of the fertile Mississippi River delta lands of the parish had brought wealth to many owners of large plantations, and agriculture as the basis of the economy of the parish had influenced the mores of the group.¹⁶³

The only library facilities in the parish prior to the parish library demonstration were school libraries and a small library located in the City Hall in Lake Providence, operated under the sponsorship of the American Legion Auxiliary. The library was opened only for a few hours a week.¹⁶⁴

Recognition of the need for parish-wide library service by the officials of the parish, resulted in the passage of an ordinance of library establishment by the Police Jury on October 12, 1949. A request for a library demonstration was made to the State Library. When the State Library was prepared to initiate the library demonstration in East Carroll Parish in 1954, action was taken as follows:

The Police Jury appropriated \$9,500.00 for the parish's part and appointed a library board representing the different areas of the parish. Members appointed were W. B. Ragland, Jr., President; Mrs. Keener Howard, Vice-President; Mrs. Casper Lensing, Treasurer; Mrs. Jarrett Collins, Mrs. Carl Pogue and Mr. George Bishop, ex-officio member as president of the Police Jury.¹⁶⁵

The library was opened formally on June 29, 1954,

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

with services provided through the combined Lake Providence Branch and Headquarters, the Carver Branch for Negroes, and the bookmobile.¹⁶⁶

A professionally trained librarian with experience in the Louisiana demonstration program, Elizabeth Cammack, was placed in charge of the East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration. The local staff members were given an orientation course in library techniques and processes prior to the opening of the demonstration by Kathryn Adams, a field worker of the Louisiana State Library.¹⁶⁷

Promotional activities of the library included press releases, book reviews, the preparation and distribution of booklists, personal contacts of the librarian, the staff, and members of the Board of Control of the library. The East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration also participated in the state-wide Reading Festival which was sponsored by the State Library.¹⁶⁸

The library provided special reference assistance for readers on a number of subjects of local interest including, irrigation, pastures, feeding stock, farm machinery, cattle raising, grafting trees, interior decoration, cooking,

¹⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 3-6.

¹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 3.

¹⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 6-7.

religion, health, psychology, and psychiatry.¹⁶⁹

Two and one-half months after the opening of the demonstration, the Police Jury decided to call a tax election for a two and one-half mills tax for ten years to support the library after the one year period of the demonstration and set November 2, 1954 as the date for the tax election.¹⁷⁰

The Board of Control of the library initiated an intensive campaign to contact the taxpayers and to provide information on the election. W. B. Ragland, Jr., president of the Board of Control of the library wrote a letter to each taxpayer which stated:

On November 2, 1954, a general election will be held in East Carroll at which time, among other things, a 2-1/2 mill tax for the purpose of sustaining a public library in our parish will be voted on by all qualified voters.

As president of the East Carroll Parish Library Board, I am asked by the Board to request you personally to vote 'Yes' on this important measure. We cannot stress too strongly the importance which a library plays in the intellectual, moral and spiritual growth of the peoples of any community. Our community is among the few remaining parishes which does not have a permanent library for its citizens, and this shortcoming can now be remedied by us at this election.

Give this measure your most careful attention when you vote on November 2, and vote 'Yes' for this worthwhile and important matter. You may not have this

¹⁶⁹Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁷⁰Ibid.

opportunity again to show your faith in our community.¹⁷¹

The outcome of the tax election assured the continuation of the East Carroll Parish Library. The results were 217 popular votes cast for the tax, representing \$1,270,410.00 in property assessment, and 154 popular votes cast against the library tax, representing \$770,415.00 in assessed valuation of property voted against the tax.¹⁷²

In commenting on the service to Negroes, the librarian stated:

East Carroll Parish is a plantation area with sixty per cent of its population Negro. As the Negro schools in the parish have been below standard, educational standards are low. These Negroes are served with one small branch located between a small Catholic school for Negroes and the public school. Use has been fair from these two schools. The high school pupils came to the library by classes during the demonstration. The principal at the Catholic School, which is an elementary school, is herself interested in books. As a result she has sent most of her pupils to the library periodically.¹⁷³

During the period of the demonstration, the Carver Branch for Negroes registered 419 borrowers and circulated

¹⁷¹Letter from W. B. Ragland, Jr. to the taxpayers of East Carroll Parish, October 27, 1954, in Cammack, op. cit., p. 7.

¹⁷²Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 6-7.

¹⁷³Cammack, op. cit., p. 5.

3,171 items. The librarian commented on the limited use of the service, stating,

The Negro service presents a great problem in a parish of this type. It cannot be solved until the general educational facilities of the Negroes are improved and the library has a better income.¹⁷⁴

The East Carroll Parish Library Demonstration registered 1,918 borrowers, and the demonstration circulated 36,150 books from a collection of 8,658 volumes.¹⁷⁵

The cost of the Demonstration to the parish authorities totaled \$9,318.33; and the State Library expended \$33,059.41 on the project, exclusive of the cost of supervisory service and book processing.¹⁷⁶

St. Martin Parish Library Demonstration

St. Martin Parish, a colorful southern Louisiana parish with a French Acadian background, maintained an educational system using the French language until the Twentieth Century; and "in the interior of the parish, many children

¹⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 5-6.

¹⁷⁵Ibid.

¹⁷⁶See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

still begin school knowing no word of English."¹⁷⁷

The educational system failed to meet the overall educational needs of the parish. St. Martin, according to the 1950 census, had the lowest literacy rate in the state. Median school years completed for persons 25 years of age and older was third grade. Fifteen per cent have no education.¹⁷⁸

As early as 1930, some of the civic-minded citizens of St. Martin Parish recognized the need for a parish library to improve the educational opportunities of the parish. T. J. Labbe, of St. Martinville, contacted the Library Commission for information concerning the establishment of a parish library. After the death of T. J. Labbe, interest in library development was not pronounced, until the period of 1940 when Edith E. Steckler interested the local organization of Business and Professional Women in sponsoring a campaign for library service. A petition was circulated to indicate to the Police Jury that the people wanted a library. Newspaper articles were printed on the subject. Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative of the State Library, was invited to

¹⁷⁷Hazel G. Sockrider, "Report of Demonstration Year, St. Martin Parish Library, 1955-1956" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1957), p. 2.

¹⁷⁸Ibid.

speak to a group of citizens on parish library development in December of 1949 at Breaux Bridge.¹⁷⁹

The St. Martin Parish Library was established by an ordinance of the Police Jury on January 3, 1950, and a request made to the State Library for a one-year demonstration of library service. When the State Library was prepared to initiate the demonstration library in St. Martin Parish in 1954, the Police Jury appropriated \$15,410.00 for local support of the demonstration.¹⁸⁰

The members of the Board of Control of the library were appointed, including:

Miss Edith E. Steckler, St. Martinville; Rt. Rev. Msgr. Henri Hamel, St. Martinville; Mrs. James E. Guirard, Catahoula; Whitney LeBlanc, Breaux Bridge; and the Rev. George Braquet, Cecilia. Paul Angelle, Jr. as president of the Police Jury became an ex-officio member.¹⁸¹

Preliminary arrangements for the demonstration were made. Hazel G. Sockrider, a professionally trained librarian, was employed to head the St. Martin Parish Library Demonstration. Sarah I. Jones, field consultant of the State Library, and Hazel G. Sockrider completed the plans for the distribution centers and executed a public relations program

¹⁷⁹Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁸¹Ibid.

to inform the citizens of the services of the library.¹⁸²

James L. Love, Chairman of the Board of the Louisiana State Library, presided at the opening ceremonies on January 9, 1955. Brief congratulatory statements were made by state and local officials, including Elmore Bonin and Eloi Girard of the Louisiana Legislature, and Wade O. Martin, Jr., Secretary of State. Edith E. Steckler, President of the St. Martin Parish Library Board of Control, spoke of the opening of the library as "a dream come true . . . and one looked forward to for five years."¹⁸³

Ceremonies blessing the library were performed by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Henri Hamel in St. Martinville and by Father George Braquet in Breaux Bridge.¹⁸⁴

Distribution centers of the library were established in St. Martinville, Breaux Bridge, Stephenville, and Belle River with the bookmobile serving the rural sections of the parish. Service to Negroes was offered through the Journet Branch in St. Martinville and the Carver Branch in Breaux Bridge.¹⁸⁵

In promoting the use of the library, the St. Martin

¹⁸²Ibid., pp. 4-7.

¹⁸³Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁸⁴Ibid.

¹⁸⁵Ibid., pp. 13-23.

Parish Library Demonstration staff participated in the state-wide Reading Festival, sponsored by the State Library; cooperated with the city of St. Martinville in issuing a folder of information for tourists; issued a booklist in cooperation with the St. Martinville Bi-Centennial Committee; issued a newsletter, entitled "Lettre De Nouvelle" to board members, heads of organizations, elected officials, ministers, library friends; and prepared and distributed booklists and folders on library services, in addition to regular press releases. Emphasis in personal relations was placed on good service as a basis of good will for the library.¹⁸⁶

The officials of St. Martin Parish, in studying the need for funds to support the library after the period of the demonstration, decided that it would be better to pass a bond issue for buildings than to rent quarters for the St. Martin Parish Library. A resolution was adopted by the Police Jury calling a special tax election on May 31, 1955, to vote on a four mills tax for ten years for support of the library after the demonstration period and a bond issue of \$160,000.00 for capital outlay to provide buildings for the parish library.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁶Ibid., pp. 24-25.

¹⁸⁷Ibid., pp. 26-28.

A campaign to inform the people on the issues affecting the library was made by Edith E. Steckler, President of the Board of Control, with the cooperation of the press, the library staff, the librarian, members of the Police Jury, and interested community organizations.¹⁸⁸

The results of the election assured the continuation of the St. Martin Parish Library, with local support following the demonstration and funds for permanent housing for the institution. The State Library commented on the election as follows:

On May 31, 1955 taxpayers passed not only a maintenance tax of four mills for ten years but a bond issue of \$160,000.00 for the construction of four library buildings. This action, taken so soon after the inauguration of service, was unprecedented in Louisiana library history.¹⁸⁹

The report on the election revealed 412 popular votes for the library maintenance tax, representing \$584,950.00 in property assessment, and 19 popular votes against the library maintenance tax, representing \$45,454.00 in property valuation voted against the tax. The results of the bond issue were 380 popular votes for the bond issue for the

¹⁸⁸Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁸⁹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 7.

library, representing \$577,990.00 in property assessment, and 48 votes against the bond issue, representing \$85,774.00 voted against the measure.¹⁹⁰

During the period of the demonstration, the St. Martin Parish Library registered 4,112 borrowers and circulated 61,586 volumes.¹⁹¹

The cost of the demonstration to the local authorities totaled \$15,410.00. The State Library expended \$28,531.94 on the project, exclusive of the cost of supervision and processing of the collection.¹⁹²

St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration

Interest in parish library development existed for ten years prior to the opening of the St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration on August 7, 1955. The movement for library establishment was encouraged by the efforts of the Noreo Lions Club. The Club aroused public opinion in favor of the library and it cooperated with the Field Representative of the State Library, Sallie J. Farrell, who presented the

¹⁹⁰Sockrider, op. cit., p. 28.

¹⁹¹Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁹²See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

issues and budgetary matters to interested citizens and the Police Jury of St. Charles Parish.¹⁹³

The Police Jury of St. Charles Parish passed an ordinance establishing the St. Charles Parish Library on November 9, 1948; and the Jury made a request to the State Library for a demonstration of library service to be conducted in the parish. When the State Library contacted the Police Jury, in October of 1952, about initiating the demonstration library, the local authorities did not have the funds to provide the local support required for the project. Action on the library was deferred until October 26, 1954, when Sallie J. Farrell appeared before the Police Jury in the interest of the library project, and the Police Jury appropriated \$12,000.00 to cover local costs of the library demonstration.¹⁹⁴

The Police Jury appointed the members of the Board of Control, including, J. C. Boyer, W. J. Tinney, Lester H. Herman, Alfred W. Brown, Leander Landeche, and V. G. Relimpio, President of the Police Jury, ex-officio a member.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹³Charlotte G. Gaylord, "St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration, August 7, 1955-August 31, 1956" (Report to the Louisiana State Library, Baton Rouge, 1957), pp. 3-4.

¹⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 3-4.

¹⁹⁵Ibid., p. 4.

The State Library employed a professionally trained librarian, Charlotte G. Gaylord, who worked with the field representatives and the Extension Department of the State Library in making the preliminary arrangements for the opening of the demonstration.¹⁹⁶

Since the Mississippi River flows through St. Charles Parish, it was necessary to provide service on both sides of the river. In seeking branch locations in Hahnville and Norco, the librarian found that:

Quarters for white branches of the library, one on each side of the river, became a very acute problem, there being very little available in this extremely rural community strung up and down the river. However, two places were at last located; the Hahnville branch and headquarters, about one block below the courthouse in Hahnville, directly on the old river road west bank. The old wooden structure was in a bad state of repair. At one time many, many years ago, there had been a grocery store on one side of the building (Hahnville Branch) and the other side was known as 'Bucket of Blood' saloon (Headquarters). This was certainly something different in the way of library quarters. . . . But with gallons of paint and a small amount of remodeling the old building took on quite an air . . . with heavy wooden doors and green shutters. And what is so often not the case with parish library demonstration quarters, we did have plenty of room.

It was even more difficult to find quarters on the east bank in Norco, but with the assistance of Mr. Relimpio, president of the Police Jury, a duplex apartment was located on Good Hope Ave. a few doors above the river road and just a block from the main shopping section.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

¹⁹⁷Ibid., pp. 5-6.

Final arrangements were made for providing library service through the distribution centers in Hahnville and Norco, and bookmobile service for the white and Negro patrons was arranged to reach the rural sections in unincorporated communities.¹⁹⁸

The formal opening of the library occurred on August 7, 1955. The ceremonies in Norco in the afternoon, followed by a program in Hahnville at seven o'clock in the evening, attracted one hundred visitors, including parish officials, librarians, and interested citizens.¹⁹⁹

The bookmobile used in the St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration was especially designed with inside and outside shelving so that it could give a dual service to white and Negro patrons. The books used on the routes which served the white patrons were housed on the inside shelves, and the resources used on the routes serving the Negro patrons were housed on the outside shelves. The librarian commented:

This was the first parish demonstration to set up bookmobile service to the Negroes in the parish. It was decided at the state level that the stationery Negro branches were not doing the job and that too many Negroes were not using the service. Therefore, the Gerstenslager Bookmobile was built with outside

¹⁹⁸Ibid., pp. 8-12.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., pp. 8-9.

shelving carrying 500 books for the Negroes at a cost of some \$500.00 extra. A Negro Bookmobile Librarian and a Negro driver were employed to take the Bookmobile out on every Tuesday and Thursday, making the complete round of the parish every two weeks in four trips and thirty stops.²⁰⁰

The bookmobile was damaged in an accident on October 14, 1955. It was not repaired and ready for use until late in December, but the scheduled book stops were met by the use of a State Library car.²⁰¹

During the period of the demonstration, the bookmobile registered 1,955 white borrowers who read 35,788 volumes; and the bookmobile service to the Negro patrons totaled a circulation of 9,672 volumes issued to 886 registered borrowers.²⁰²

The total circulation for the St. Charles Parish Library Demonstration was 72,749 volumes issued to 4,012 registered borrowers. The service which was provided to the 13,363 residents of the parish, with 4,349 being Negroes, reached thirty-five per cent of the white population and twenty per cent of the Negro population of the parish.²⁰³

The library program was publicized through talks to schools and organized groups, booklists, exhibits, personal

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 11.

²⁰¹Ibid., pp. 10-11.

²⁰²Ibid., pp. 20-21.

²⁰³Ibid.

contacts, and the press. The librarian received assistance in publicizing the library from Gene Yoes, owner and publisher of the weekly newspaper, The St. Charles Herald.²⁰⁴

The tax election for the support of the library following the demonstration was held on April 2, 1956. The election results revealed that 731 votes were cast for the tax, representing \$998,983.00 in property assessment, and only 15 popular votes were cast against the tax, representing \$9,440.00 in assessed valuation. The tax levy was 2 mills for ten years on all property assessments, thus continued local support of the library was assured.²⁰⁵

The St. Charles Parish Police Jury appropriated \$12,000.00 for the library demonstration. The State Library expended \$34,409.20 on the project, exclusive of the salaries of the field workers and the staff of the Extension Department engaged in the demonstration.²⁰⁶

VIII. IN-SERVICE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The State Library provided leadership and sponsorship,

²⁰⁴Ibid., pp. 12-14.

²⁰⁵Ibid., p. 25.

²⁰⁶See Appendix, Table III on Cost of Demonstration, based on financial records of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission, p. 457.

during the years 1951 through 1955, for a Citizenship Program, an American Heritage Discussion project, and a statewide Reading Festival, which contributed to the continuing professional growth of persons engaged in public library service, as well as expanding the reading activities in the respective libraries (accounts of the special projects appear in section IV. of this chapter).

In addition to the general participation of public library personnel in the special projects, two conferences were arranged during the period for parish librarians, jointly sponsored by the Louisiana State Library and the Library School of Louisiana State University. A Book Festival for parish librarians occurred on October 25-27, 1951, and a Parish Librarians' Institute was held on July 19-24, 1954.

Accounts of these in-service professional activities are elaborated in the sections to follow.

Book Festival

A Book Festival, which focused the attention of public library personnel of Louisiana on the American Heritage program of the American Library Association, was sponsored by the State Library and the Library School of Louisiana State

University on October 25-27, 1951.²⁰⁷

The activity, which was held at the Adult Education Center of Louisiana State University, featured a seasonal theme in presenting a harvest of books and ideas to stimulate the promotion of the American Heritage program in local libraries throughout the state.²⁰⁸

The guest speakers for the Book Festival included Elizabeth Riley, children's books editor of Thomas Y. Crowell Company; Frank Wardlaw, Director of the University of Texas Press; and Walter Watkins, Mississippi author and former faculty member of Louisiana State University.²⁰⁹

Book exhibits, bibliographies, display materials, and film lists were prepared to heighten interest in the project and to facilitate local promotional activities. Two displays suggesting film forums were of particular interest to librarians planning club programs with Heritage emphasis.²¹⁰

Parish Librarians' Institute

A Parish Librarians' Institute, to study modern

²⁰⁷Fourteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1950-1951 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 8.

²⁰⁸Ibid.

²⁰⁹Ibid.

²¹⁰Ibid., p. 9.

developments in library services to adults and techniques in promoting more effective use of libraries by adults, was sponsored by the State Library and the Library School of Louisiana State University on July 19-24, 1954.²¹¹

The consultant for the institute was Florence Craig, Director of Adult Education, Cuyahoga (Ohio) County Library. The activities of the institute included the study and demonstration of techniques in reading promotion and group processes; new techniques in audience participation; how to plan and conduct a program planners conference; book taster talks; film discussions; and the use of phonograph records with books on programs.²¹²

IX. STATE BOARD OF LIBRARY EXAMINERS

The State Board of Library Examiners appointed by the State Library Board composed of Debora R. Abramson, Chairman of the Board and Assistant State Librarian; John Hall Jacobs, Librarian of the New Orleans Public Library; and Rubie M. Hanks, Librarian of the Winn Parish Library; met according to

²¹¹Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 9-10.

²¹²Ibid., p. 10.

Legislative Act 36 of 1926 to examine applicants for certificates to serve as administrative librarians in Louisiana Parish libraries.²¹³

Since there were not sufficient applicants for the examination in 1955, no examination was given. However, the certificates of the administrative librarians which were scheduled to expire in 1955 remained active until a subsequent meeting of the Board.²¹⁴

A list of the persons holding administrative certificates is included in the Appendix of this study.²¹⁵

X. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The public relations policies of the State Library which permeated the entire program of service and all activities of the staff, were emphasized especially in the Citizenship Program, the American Heritage project, the Reading Festival, and in the participation of members of the State Library staff in the Louisiana Adult Education Conference covered in section IV of this chapter.

²¹³Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 24-25.

²¹⁴Ibid., p. 25.

²¹⁵See Appendix for Status of Certificates Issued by State Board of Library Examiners, 1955, p. 466.

During the years 1951-1955, with full participation of the staff of the State Library, information on the services, activities, and housing needs of the agency were brought to the attention of the public despite several changes of public relations assistants. Special exhibits, booklists, and cooperative services for the Bicentennial Celebration of the Louisiana Purchase and the Acadian Bicentennial Celebration enlarged the scope of the public relations activities of the State Library. The relations of the State Library with the people of Louisiana were strengthened during the period by a state-wide meeting of library trustees and the work of the Citizens' Library Movement.²¹⁶

Accounts of the work of the State Library in cooperation with the Bicentennial Celebration of the Louisiana Purchase, the Acadian Bicentennial Celebration, the Public Library Trustees, and the Citizens' Library Movement are covered in the sections to follow.

Bicentennial Celebration of the Louisiana Purchase, 1953

The State Library participated in the Bicentennial Celebration of the Louisiana Purchase in 1953, by sending a

²¹⁶Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955
(Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 4, 7-15.

bookmobile carrying an exhibit of appropriate books, films, pictures, maps, and related materials to seven fairs and festivals which were held in the State during the year. Several sound films on Louisiana and the Louisiana Purchase were shown at the traveling exhibit.²¹⁷

Acadian Bicentennial Celebration, 1955

The State Library cooperated with the Acadian Bicentennial Celebration Committee by assisting with the research for the celebration, and by preparing bibliographies, and providing colored slides. Exhibits on the Acadians were prepared and made available for use by clubs, schools, and libraries; and club programs and study outlines emphasizing the celebrating were prepared for use by various organizations.²¹⁸

State-wide Meeting of Library Trustees

The Trustees Section and the Public Library Section of the Louisiana Library Association and the Louisiana State Library sponsored a state-wide meeting of trustees and administrative librarians of parish libraries on October 7, 1955 in Alexandria. The meeting was planned to emphasize

²¹⁷Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 6.

²¹⁸Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), pp. 17-18.

effective trusteeship.²¹⁹

John S. Richards, President of the American Library Association, and S. Janice Kee, Executive Secretary of the Public Libraries Division of the American Library Association, were the guest speakers.²²⁰

Citizens' Library Movement

The Citizens' Library Movement was reactivated at a meeting in New Orleans on May 8, 1953, when James L. Love of Hammond was elected president of the organization, succeeding J. H. Mercer who had died in 1952. Lois J. Lester of Bains was elected secretary.

Other officers of the Movement included: Mrs. Fenn A. Leaming, Mansfield, vice-president; C. Paul Phelps, Ponchatoula, treasurer; John Caffery, Franklin, Dr. Harriet Daggett, Baton Rouge, and Mrs. Martha Robinson, New Orleans, directors; and Sallie J. Farrell, Baton Rouge, executive secretary.²²¹

Two goals were adopted by the executive board of the Citizens' Library Movement for the year 1954. These goals were: "to secure legislative funds for a new building for the State Library, and to secure increased funds from the

²¹⁹Ibid., p. 10.

²²⁰Ibid.

²²¹Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1952-1953 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 20.

legislature for the State Library's development program."²²²

The following procedures were adopted as means of achieving the goals of the organization:

- (1) personal contacts with the heads of state-wide organizations,
- (2) letters to presidents of every parish library board in the state,
- (3) meeting with parish librarians,
- (4) personal contacts with state legislators, and
- (5) letters to every newspaper editor in Louisiana.

Mimeographed materials were prepared for wide distribution; and by the end of 1953, several statewide organizations, as well as numbers of parish library boards, local clubs, and parish units of the Citizens' Library Movement, had adopted strong resolutions supporting the Movement's projects.²²³

The efforts of persons interested in the growth and development of the program of the State Library and the work to secure a new building to provide adequate housing for the institution were rewarded in the action of the Legislature of 1954, which provided increased funds for the State Library for the year 1955 (See section I of this chapter) and voted a bond issue of two million dollars for a new State Library Building.²²⁴

²²²Ibid., pp. 20-21

²²³Ibid., p. 21.

²²⁴Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 2.

XI. A NEW BUILDING

An outstanding event in the history of the State Library took place in 1954 when the Louisiana Legislature provided two million dollars for a new building for the Louisiana State Library.

The need for more adequate housing for the institution has been reflected in the history of the agency from the time the library was moved in 1940 from the State Capitol building to the Old Hill Memorial Library building, a structure which had been constructed forty-one years earlier to house the library of Louisiana State University. Through the years of its occupancy by the Louisiana State Library, the Old Hill Memorial Library building was considered entirely inadequate for the functioning of a modern centralized state library agency.²²⁵

John Desmond of Hammond, Louisiana was named as the designing architect for the new building, and William R. Burk of New Orleans was selected as the structural architect. The library consultants named to study the plans for functional efficiency for library service were Ralph A. Ulveling and Charles M. Mohrhardt of the Associated Library Building

²²⁵Ibid.

Consultants, who were consultants for the American Free Library in Berlin and the UNESCO sponsored library in Medellin, Columbia, South America.²²⁶

Three sites were selected and approved successively and architectural plans were made for the respective sites, before the final location for the new State Library Building was determined and approved by the Louisiana Building Authority.²²⁷ A building site across the lake from the Capitol was considered undesirable by officials of the library, and a proposed location on the east lawn of the Capitol grounds was protested by Baton Rouge citizens. An editorial in the Morning Advocate of Baton Rouge stated:

A good bit of money and an immense amount of care and effort went into the creation of the Capitol grounds. . . . As a result the Capitol has a well deserved reputation as one of the most beautiful in the nation. It is one of the state's chief tourist attractions and is a source of pride to every Louisianian.²²⁸

The final location selected and approved by the Building Authority was the site immediately in front of the Old Hill

²²⁶News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), January 20, 1956.

²²⁷Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Louisiana State Library, formerly Louisiana Library Commission: 1954-1955 (Baton Rouge: n.n., n.d.), p. 2.

²²⁸Editorial in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), June 23, 1955.

Memorial Library building.²²⁹

The description of the building plans, released in the State-Times of Baton Rouge on January 20, 1956 stated:

The building will house all phases of the state library activity including the services to the blind now located in New Orleans because of the lack of space in the present building.

The spacious, contemporary structure will be situated immediately in front of the old Hill Memorial Library, present location of the library.

The main readers' services will be on the ground floor as much as the site conditions allow, and all administrative offices are to be on the mezzanine. Readers' services consist of the hundreds of books circulated daily to individuals in parishes without library service and to other libraries to supplement their collections; the special requests filled by the Reference Department; the Louisiana Collection, which includes all books by or about Louisianians and information and books about the state.

Space has been designed on the main floor for large gift collections and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 240 will be on the main level. Services to the Legislature and to all state employees and all reference books, magazines and periodicals also will be located on the floor.

The extension department, responsible for selecting, ordering, and shipping all books and periodicals to the two demonstration libraries established each year by the state library, will be located on the third level. Also on this floor will be the Negro service currently located at Southern University.

The fourth level will house the services to the blind, and on the fifth level will be a staff room, a lecture room and space for general collections.

Desmond said, 'The building has been designed with a concrete frame with relatively simple interior finishes. Exposed face brick will be used in the stack areas,

²²⁹News item in the Morning Advocate (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), June 23, 1955.

rubber and vinyl flooring are to be in the working and office areas. There will be acoustical ceilings and flourescent lighting and the main floor will have walnut paneling. The exterior facing will be white marble.²³⁰

The progress of the construction of the new building for the State Library was delayed pending action on the bids for the construction of the building until April 5, 1956, when the contract was let to George A. Caldwell, contractor of Baton Rouge.²³¹ An editorial in the State-Times commented on this important achievement in the history of the State Library as follows:

At long last a contract has been awarded for construction of a new state library building. Few projects have seemed to be the subject of so many difficulties for such a worthy project.

The building for the Louisiana State Library has long been inadequate. Service of the library has grown steadily through the years, but the facilities now used were never planned for the kind of operation now required of the library. An old building once housed the LSU library of years ago has been used by the State Library.

It seemed for a long time that money would never be authorized for a new structure. But, finally, friends of the library won sufficient support to get it included in the 1954 bond issue. That seemed to settle the matter. But then there was a prolonged hassle over location, with some changes in design required on the basis of changes of plans for locating the structure. Then, capping it all, there was a mix up on some of the

²³⁰News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), January 20, 1956.

²³¹News item in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), April 5, 1956.

bidding when the plans were offered to contractors, and this had to be cleared up.

But now, a contract for \$1,615,000 has been let. The work will start soon. The state will get a library building that will meet requirements for the first time in years. The work of Miss Culver, our state librarian, and her capable assistants will be enhanced. People all over the state will benefit from the new structure.²³²

²³²Editorial in the State-Times (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), April 9, 1956.

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Debora R. Abramson, Assistant State Librarian, Louisiana State Library.

Sallie J. Farrell, Field Representative, Louisiana State Library.

Sarah I. Jones, Field Consultant, Louisiana State Library.

Kathryn Adams, Field Consultant, Louisiana State Library.

Lois F. Shortess, Head, Extension Department, Louisiana State Library.

Margaret M. Reed, Member, Board of Commissioners, Louisiana Library Commission.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

DECEMBER 10, 1909

George Hathaway
William Peer
Augustine J. Himel, M.D.
Inez Mortland
Jane Grey Rogers
Mrs. Louis Dessommes
Eleanor Kopman
Elizabeth S. Thornton
Mrs. Anna E. Joyce
Katherine Bres
May Moran
J. E. Phelps
M. Eleanor Mitchell
Lucille T. Simmons
Clemence Gallier
Ada C. Reynolds
Estelle Pitot
Louise E. Howe
Viola H. Knee
Mrs. M. G. Jones

Henry M. Gill
Esther Finlay Harvey
Elizabeth Ducros
Helen Wells Dodd
Minnie M. Bell
Mrs. R. C. Bond
Mrs. James Andrews
H. R. Bell
Julius Seven
S. M. Brame
H. H. White
Lillie J. Thornton
Zula McClure
Mrs. G. W. Remage
Miss A. M. Bell
Natalie Barton
Virginia Fairfax
Mrs. W. H. McClendon
Mrs. M. H. Williams
M. L. Uberle

APPENDIX B

ACT NO. 149 OF 1910

To aid public education by providing a general library law for the State, except as to cities of over one hundred thousand inhabitants and as to libraries and library boards already in existence; providing for the creation, establishment, maintenance and equipment of libraries throughout the State; providing for the creation, commissioning and appointment of library boards, defining their duties and powers and authority and repealing all laws or parts of laws in conflict therewith.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, that whenever not less than twenty-five (25) citizens of any parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision of this State shall desire to create, establish, maintain and equip a public library in such, parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision that such citizens shall address a petition or memorial, signed by such petitioners or memorialists, to the police jury, city council or such other governing authority of such parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision, petitioning and memorializing them to create, establish, maintain and equip a public library in such parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision.

Section 2. Be it further enacted, etc. That upon the said petition or memorial being favorably acted on by such police jury, city council or other governing authority, it shall be promulgated in the same manner that resolutions or ordinances of such police jury, city council or other governing authority is published and promulgated, and if within thirty days from the last day of such promulgation or publication of such petition a number of citizens equalling or exceeding the number contained in the petition or memorial praying for the creation of said library of such parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision do not by written protest signed by such protestants, protest against the erection, creation, maintenance and equipment of such public

library, in such political subdivision, the said police jury, city council or other governing authority of such political subdivision shall have full power and authority to appropriate and set aside, out of any money or monies in the treasury of such political subdivision not otherwise appropriated, a sufficient sum for the erection, creation and equipment of such public library and shall have full power and authority to appropriate and provide for the maintenance of such library.

Section 3. Be it further enacted, etc., That the police jury, city council, or other governing authority shall, at the same time and by the same ordinance as the appropriation for the erection, establishment, equipment of such library is made, as provided in Section 2 hereof, nominate, appoint and commission a Board of Control thereof, to be composed of not less than five or more than seven members, said members to be citizens of the city, town or village or other political subdivision of this State appropriating such money for said library, which Board of Control, after taking an oath to well and faithfully perform their duties as members of such Board of Control, shall be vested with full control and supervision of the erection, establishment, maintenance and equipment of such library, and, shall, at its first meeting after its appointment and qualification, elect one of its members as chairman, another as secretary, and a third as treasurer, provided that the treasurer so elected shall furnish bond with good and solvent surety conditioned for the faithful performance of his duties, and provided that such bond shall be in an amount to be determined by such board, provided that such bond shall not be for a less amount than is appropriated by the police jury, city council or other governing authority for such library.

Section 4. Be it further enacted, etc., That such Board of Control so appointed and commissioned shall be appointed and commissioned for a term of six years from the date of their appointment, provided that the first board appointed and commissioned under this Act shall consist of six members, two to be appointed and commissioned for two years, two to be appointed and commissioned for four years and two to be appointed and commissioned for six years, and provided further, that no officer of such board or any member thereof shall ever receive any remuneration whatsoever from said library or the funds appropriated for same. That said Board of Control shall have power and authority to make all

necessary rules, regulations and by-laws for the proper governing of such library and for their own body, that they shall have exclusive control of the expenditures of all funds appropriated, donated or acquired in any other way, provided that all sums proposed to be expended over five hundred dollars shall be first submitted to and approved by the police jury or other governing authority of such political subdivision. That vacancies in said board, from whatsoever cause, shall be filled in the same manner as the original members thereof were appointed and commissioned.

Section 5. Be it further enacted, etc., That all sums to be expended by said Board shall only be withdrawn from its treasury upon the warrant of the treasurer, approved by the chairman and countersigned by the secretary; that such Board of Control shall have power and authority to purchase or otherwise acquire, title to real estate whereon to establish such library, provided that the title to same shall be vested in such parish, city, town, village or other political subdivision appropriating the funds for the same and provided that such Board of Control shall not, in any one year, create debts for more than the estimated revenues of such board for one year's time, except that property donated or given to such board need not be calculated in, or estimated as the annual estimated revenues thereof.

Section 6. Be it further enacted, etc., That this Act shall take effect from and after its promulgation and shall not apply to libraries or library boards already in existence, or to cities, towns or villages of over one-hundred thousand inhabitants.

Section 7. Be it further enacted, etc., That all laws or parts of laws in conflict herewith be and the same are hereby repealed.

APPENDIX C

ACT NO. 225 of 1920

Creating a State Library Commission to be known as the "Louisiana Library Commission"; defining its duties and powers and method of operation; and providing for the appointment of the membership and employees thereof, and their duties.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, That there is hereby created a State Library Commission, to be known as the "Louisiana Library Commission." Said Commission shall be assigned permanent quarters in the City of Baton Rouge, and as soon as possible in the State House.

Section 2. Be it further enacted, etc., That the Commission shall consist of five people appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate, at least two of whom shall be women. The Governor shall fill all vacancies for unexpired terms.

Section 3. Be it further enacted, etc., That the officers of the Commission shall be a Chairman selected from the members thereof, for a term of one year, and a Secretary, who shall be a trained and experienced Librarian not a member of the Commission, appointed by the Commission under such conditions and for such compensation as the Commission shall deem adequate. Said Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Commission; keep accurate accounts of its financial transactions; have charge of its work in organizing new libraries and improving those already established; supervise the work of the traveling libraries; and in general perform such duties as may from time to time be assigned him or her by the Commission. Said Commission may also employ such other assistants as shall be required for the performance of the Commission's work, who shall serve under such conditions as the Commission shall determine. In addition to their salaries, the Secretary and assistants shall be allowed their actual expenses while absent from the Commission office in the service of the Commission. The term "Trained and experienced librarian" is

for the purpose of this law defined as a man or woman who shall have had at least one year's training in a library school and at least three years' successful experience as head of a free, public or institutional library or as an assistant of high rank in such library.

Section 4. Be it further enacted, etc., That the work of the Commission shall be to give advice to all schools, State institutional and free public libraries, and to all communities in the State which may propose to establish libraries, as to the best means of establishing and administering them, selecting and cataloging books, and other details of library management. It may send any of its members to aid in the organization of such libraries or to assist in the improvement of those already established. It may also receive gifts of books, money, or other property, which may be used or held in trust for the purpose or purposes given; may purchase and operate traveling libraries, and circulate such libraries within the State among communities, libraries, schools, colleges, universities, library associations, study clubs, and charitable and penal institutions, under such conditions and rules as the Commission may deem necessary to protect the interest of the State and best increase the efficiency of the service it is expected to render the public. It may publish lists and circulars of information, and may cooperate with other Library Commissions and libraries in the publication of documents, in order to secure the most economical administration of the work for which it was formed. It may conduct courses or schools of library instruction and hold library institutes in various parts of the State, and cooperate with others in such schools or institutes. It may also conduct a clearing house for periodicals for free gift to local libraries and shall perform such other service in behalf of public libraries as it may consider for the best interest of the State.

In connection with and under the supervision of each normal school in the State and the President of the State University the Commission may arrange for a course of lectures every year at each of the said normal schools and the said State University on book selection, the use and care of books and the cataloging and administration of school libraries. It may cooperate with the State Board of Education in devising plans for the care of school libraries, in aiding teachers in school library administration, and in formulating rules and regulations governing the use of such libraries throughout the State. Such

suggestions, rules, and regulations for school libraries are to be promulgated through the State Superintendent of Public Education.

Section 5. Be it further enacted, etc., That the Commission shall make a biennial report to the Governor, which report shall show library conditions and progress in Louisiana, and shall contain an itemized statement of the expenses of the Commission. This report, when printed, shall be presented to the General Assembly of the State. It shall be printed and bound by the State under the regulations governing the printing of other reports of the executive officers of the State, and it shall be distributed by the Library Commission.

Section 6. Be it further enacted, etc., That the Commission shall each year obtain from all the free public libraries of Louisiana reports showing the condition, growth, development and conduct of said libraries, and similar reports from other libraries in the State at its discretion, which reports shall be incorporated in said biennial report.

Section 7. Be it further enacted, etc., That all laws and parts of laws in conflict with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

APPENDIX D

ACT NO. 36 OF 1926

Authorizing the establishment of public libraries in parishes and municipalities, the City of New Orleans and the Parish of Orleans excepted; creating a State Board of Library Examiners and defining their duties, powers and qualifications and providing for their appointment; authorizing the creation, establishment, equipment and maintenance of public libraries throughout the State and providing for the methods of operation and administration of such by Boards of Control and defining their duties, powers and authority; providing for the raising of funds by taxation, for the establishment, maintenance, support and upkeep of public libraries and repealing all laws or parts of laws in conflict herewith.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana, That the governing authority of any parish or municipal corporation in this State, the City of New Orleans and Parish of Orleans excepted, may of its own initiative, create, establish, equip, maintain, operate and support a public library in such parish or municipality and shall create, establish, equip, maintain, operate and support such a public library when not less than twenty-five per cent of the duly qualified property tax-payers resident in such parish or municipality shall petition the governing authority thereof to establish such a public library for such parish or municipality. Provided that two or more parishes may join in the establishment of a public library to be supported and maintained by them jointly in the proportions as may be determined by the Police Juries of the respective parishes or other governing authority, and provided that a parish and one or more municipal corporations may jointly establish, maintain and operate a public library and provided also that one parish or municipality may contract with another parish or parishes, municipality or municipalities to furnish library service upon such terms and conditions and for such considerations as the governing authorities concerned may stipulate and agree by written contract pursuant to ordinances duly passed by them.

Section 2. That a public library under this act shall be created by an ordinance regularly passed and adopted by the Police Jury of the parish, or other governing authority thereof, and the municipal council or other governing authority of such municipality. Provided that all parish libraries shall be established at the Parish site and the municipal libraries within the corporate limits of the municipality so creating and establishing them. Provided further that branch libraries may be established and maintained by either a parish or municipal library as the public demands require.

Section 3. That for the purposes of acquiring a site or grounds or erecting a building or buildings thereon or additions thereto, the governing authority of the parish or municipality, as the case may be, shall be authorized to either anticipate the revenues of such parish or municipality and issue bonds or certificates based thereon under the provisions of the existing laws or submit to the taxpayers qualified to vote at a special election to be called and held in such parish or municipality by and under the governing authority thereof, pursuant to the laws of the State for holding such elections, to vote negotiable bonds, within the limitations authorized by law, for the purposes of acquiring a site and building or buildings and erecting a building or additions thereto for a public library in such parish or municipality and to thereafter levy and collect taxes to pay and retire such bonds, should the same be authorized at such election.

Section 4. That the governing authority of such parish or municipality shall, in the ordinance creating a public library, name and appoint five citizens of such parish or municipality as a Board of Control for such public library to serve for terms of one, two, three, four and five years and their successors shall each be appointed for a term of five years; provided that the President of the Police Jury or Mayor of the municipality shall be ex-officio a member of the Board of Control of such public library.

Section 5. That the Board of Control shall meet and organize immediately after their appointment and annually thereafter and elect one member President, another Vice President, another Secretary and another Treasurer, whose duties shall be those customarily exercised by such officers.

The Board of Control shall have power and authority to establish rules and regulations for its own government and that of the library not inconsistent with law and shall have authority to elect and employ a librarian and upon her recommendation and approval assistant librarians and other employees and fix their salaries and compensation, provided they shall not contract for a longer period than four years nor with any person as head librarian who has not been certified by the State Board of Library Examiners as in this act provided for; provided the head librarian may be appointed or elected Secretary of the Board of Control.

Section 6. It shall be the duty of the President of the Board of Control and the librarian of every public library established and maintained under this act to make annual reports to the Louisiana Library Commission giving such statistics and other information as may be required by the Commission and such reports to be made at such time and on such blanks or forms as the Commission may require and provide. The governing authority of the parish or municipality establishing the public library and creating the Board of Control may also require reports annually or quarterly or both of the Board or its President.

Section 7. That the governing authority of such parish or municipality may on its own initiative and shall when requested by a petition of not less than twenty-five per cent of the duly qualified property taxpayers resident submit to the property taxpayers a proposition to vote a special tax within the limitations as to millage and years, as provided by the Constitution and laws of this State for the maintenance and support of such public library and its branches, which tax, if voted, shall be levied and assessed annually as authorized by the voters and collected and used exclusively for the support and maintenance of such public library. That in all cases where a public library is jointly established and maintained each parish and municipal corporation concerned shall contribute its pro rata or equitable share of the costs and expense and each shall be as nearly as possible equally represented on the Board of Control, the presiding officer of each governing authority being an ex-officio member of such Board of Control. All parishes or municipalities receiving library service from another parish or municipality shall be authorized to contract and pay for the same either out of general fund or out of special funds voted, levied and collected for the purpose and the parish

or municipality so receiving such funds for such service shall use and expend the funds for library purposes only.

Section 8. That the costs of establishing and maintaining a parish public library shall be borne by the entire parish including the incorporated towns therein and all taxes levied and assessed, whether general or special, for the establishment, support and maintenance of such parish public library shall be borne proportionately by all of the property of the parish including that within incorporated municipalities, unless in the ordinance creating the parish public library the municipality is expressly excluded because of its exemption from parochial taxation or because such municipality owns, maintains and operates its own public library, and in such cases will not be entitled to library service, except upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon as provided in Section 1 of this act. Nor shall the residents or taxpayers of such excluded municipality be counted in making up the number of petitioners required in Sections 1 and 7 of this act.

Section 9. That all municipalities already owning and maintaining public libraries may become a part of the parish public library, either the head library, if located in the Parish Seat, or a branch library, if located elsewhere in the parish, upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon between the governing authorities of the parish and municipality affected by ordinances regularly and legally passed and adopted evidencing such a merger and consolidation; provided that in all cases where the municipality has bound or obligated itself to maintain and support the public library in order to keep inviolate any trust, gift or bequest for such purposes, that the parish into which such municipal library is merged shall assume and become responsible for the faithful performance of the obligation and the execution of the trust assumed by the municipality.

Section 10. That the expenses or costs of maintenance of the public library, including the salaries of librarian and assistants and other employees and other incidental expenses, shall be paid monthly by the governing authority establishing the library, upon the approval of such expenses and maintenance costs by the Board of Control of such library, out of the funds specially budgeted from the general fund for library purposes and, in default thereof, out of special taxes voted, levied and collected by the governing authority for the library's support and maintenance.

Section 11. That the Board of Control of every public library created and maintained under the provisions of this act shall be authorized to receive and accept unconditional gifts, donations and contributions from individuals and corporations, but no gifts or donations conditionally made shall be accepted without the approval of the governing authority of the parish or municipality creating the public library. All moneys, property and other things of value given or contributed to a public library shall be turned over to the Treasurer of the Board of Control and shall be expended or invested by the librarian with the approval of the Board of Control.

Section 12. That there is hereby created a State Board of Library Examiners to be composed of three members, all of whom must be experienced and trained librarians, appointed and chosen by the Louisiana Library Commission, whose duties and powers shall be to meet and organize and elect officers by electing one Chairman and a Secretary. The said Board of Library Examiners shall have authority to establish rules and regulations for its government and prescribe examinations, qualifications, conditions and requirements for those seeking certificates or permits to practice the profession of librarian. That the Board shall hold at least one examination a year for the purposes of examining applicants for certificates as librarian at the office of the Louisiana Library Commission in Baton Rouge and may hold other examinations at other places in the State as may suit the convenience of the Board and the applicants. Said Board members shall be appointed and hold office for a term of four years.

Section 13. The Board of Library Examiners shall report annually to the Louisiana Library Commission, furnishing such statistical information as may be required by the Commission.

All applicants for the certificates as librarian shall be required to deposit and pay to the Louisiana Library Commission a fee of Five (\$5.00) Dollars and, if the applicant passes successfully the examination, will be given a certificate by the Board of Examiners. All fees collected by the Board shall be turned over by it to the Louisiana Library Commission to defray the incidental expenses for certificates, traveling expenses, stationery, postage, etc. The members of the Board shall serve without pay.

Section 14. That no judgment of court declaring a part of this act unconstitutional shall affect the remainder of the act, if the same standing alone is constitutional.

Section 15. That all laws or parts of laws in conflict with this act be and the same are hereby repealed.

APPENDIX E

ACT NO. 102 OF 1946

Relative to the creation and establishment of a State Library with domicile in the State Capital, designating the present, existing library of the Louisiana Library Commission as the Louisiana State Library, declaring all books, property, effects and assets of the Louisiana State Library, providing for a Board of Commissioners of said Louisiana State Library and prescribing the qualifications, mode of selection and appointment, and terms of office of the members, and the powers and authority of the Board, and requiring the said Board to organize, elect officers, and to meet quarterly at the headquarters of the Louisiana State Library or elsewhere as designated and at such times as may be necessary for the transaction of the business of the Louisiana State Library, and creating the office of Executive Secretary and prescribing the qualifications, mode of selection, term of office, compensation, powers and authority of such officer, and authorizing the Louisiana State Library to organize and maintain for the use of the Legislature and State officials and the public in general a Legislative Reference Library at the State Capital, and transferring all the functions, powers and authority of the Louisiana Library Commission conferred by Act 225 of 1920 and subsequent laws to and vesting the same in the Louisiana State Library and its Board of Commissioners, and repealing all laws or parts of laws contrary to or in conflict herewith.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the Legislature of Louisiana, That there is hereby created and established a State Library domiciled in the City of Baton Rouge, the State Capital, and the Library presently operated by the Louisiana Library Commission shall be hereafter designated and known as the Louisiana State Library.

Section 2. That there is hereby created a Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library, to be composed

of five members appointed by the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and commissioned, with overlapping terms, the members of the first board to be appointed one for one year, one for two years, one for three years, one for four years, and one for five years, and their successors each to be appointed for five year terms, each member to serve until his successor is commissioned and qualified, and to serve without pay, but the first Board of Commissioners appointed hereunder need not be confirmed by the Senate and shall be appointed by the Governor within thirty (30) days after the effective date of this Act.

Section 3. That the members of the said Board of Commissioners shall be selected without political consideration from the entire State, and that at all times at least two members of the Board shall be women; provided that the members cannot be removed except for cause shown during their terms of office.

Section 4. That immediately upon the selection and appointment of the first Board of Commissioners the members shall meet at Baton Rouge in the State Capital on the call of the Secretary of the former Louisiana Library Commission and organize by electing a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, and an Executive Secretary and provide for quarterly meetings of the Board and special meetings on the call of the Chairman or any three members. A majority of the whole membership shall be required to constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of the Louisiana State Library, and the Executive Secretary and the Chairman, acting jointly, will be authorized at all times to transact routine business. Until such time as the Board of Commissioners has been organized, the Executive Secretary of the former Louisiana Library Commission and the staff of the former commission shall continue in charge of the Louisiana State Library with the same duties and authority as they severally have at the present time.

Section 5. That the Executive Secretary shall be the chief librarian and chief executive officer of the Louisiana State Library and the director of library development and service throughout the State, and shall also be the secretary of the Board of Commissioners.

Section 6. That the term of office of the Executive Secretary shall be for a period of five years, provided that by unanimous vote of the Board of Commissioners the office of

Executive Secretary may be declared vacant and the Executive Secretary removed for cause.

Section 7. That the Executive Secretary shall possess the following qualifications: He or she shall be of good moral character and shall be a trained, experienced librarian, holding a degree from some standard college or university, and, in addition thereto, have completed the required course in a recognized or accredited school of library science and have had at least five years' experience as an administrative librarian or director of some state or public library serving a populated area of not less than fifty thousand people.

Section 8. That the Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library, through the Executive Secretary as the chief administrative officer and director of library development in the State, shall plan and work toward a co-ordinated system of parish and regional libraries throughout the State of Louisiana, so as to give and furnish every citizen and resident of the State free library service of the highest quality consistent with modern methods and as may be justified by financial and economic conditions; that the said Executive Secretary shall endeavor to co-ordinate and integrate the library service so as to afford the schools, colleges, and universities the best free library service possible by means of interloan arrangements, book exchanges, etc.

Section 9. It shall be the duty of the Executive Secretary, when called upon, to give supervisory service and advice to all parish, institutional and public libraries, except law libraries, in the State from time to time, and to require of all such parish, institutional and public libraries, except law libraries, to file with the Louisiana State Library annual reports on such forms as may be prescribed by the Executive Secretary, giving such statistical and other information as is thought necessary and proper, and it shall be the duty of all such tax-supported libraries, when called upon by the Executive Secretary, to make and submit reports and furnish such information as may be required, annually, or at such other times as the Executive Secretary may deem necessary; and these reports shall be filed with the Louisiana State Library on or before the 31st day of January of each and every year for the preceding calendar year.

Section 10. That it shall be the duty of the Executive Secretary, biennially, at least thirty days before the

regular sessions of the Legislature of Louisiana, to make a report to the Governor of the statistical and other information thought desirable or any that may be specially called for by the Governor or the Legislature, and such biennial report of the Executive Secretary shall be printed and distributed at public expense in sufficient quantities for each member of the Legislature and all public officials of the State to have copies when desired, and such report shall show the progress and development of library service in the State during such period.

Section 11. That all functions, powers and authority heretofore granted to the Louisiana Library Commission by Act 225 of 1920 and subsequently enacted laws are hereby transferred to the Louisiana State Library to be exercised by it and shall be understood and construed to have been passed and adopted for the use and benefit of the Louisiana State Library.

Section 12. That all the necessary and actual traveling expenses incurred by the Executive Secretary or any members of the staff, acting under the authority and direction of the Executive Secretary, while on business for the Louisiana State Library, and all actual and necessary traveling expenses of the several members of the Board of Commissioners of the Louisiana State Library, shall be paid by the State from the funds appropriated and made available for the use, maintenance and operation of the Louisiana State Library.

Section 13. That all books, property, effects and assets of the Louisiana Library Commission are hereby declared to be the books, property effects and assets of the Louisiana State Library.

Section 14. That the Louisiana State Library shall organize and maintain, for the use of the Legislature and the State officials in particular and for the public in general, a Legislative Reference Library, at the State Capital in charge of a trained and experienced librarian, working under the direction of the Executive Secretary, to give assistance to the Legislators and State officials.

Section 15. That all laws or parts of laws in conflict herewith be and the same are hereby repealed.

APPENDIX F

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY, FORMERLY LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION 1920-1955

Members of the Library Commission appointed in 1920
by Governor John M. Parker included:

David Fichman, New Orleans
R. W. Hayes, New Orleans
Harriet Daggett, Jennings
Katherine Hill, Baton Rouge
Margaret M. Reed (Mrs. A. G.), Baton Rouge

Members of the Board of Commissioners appointed following the reorganization of the Library Commission in 1925 through 1955 (end of this study), with the dates of the period of service of each member were:

Members	Period of Service
G. P. Wyckoff, New Orleans	1925-1930
Katherine Hill, Baton Rouge	1925-1940
Margaret M. Reed, Baton Rouge	1925-1940, 1942
Eleanor McMain, New Orleans	1925-1926
F. K. White, Lake Charles	1925-1926
J. O. Modisette, Jennings	1926-1942
Hugh M. Blain, New Orleans	1928-1938
Frank Voelker, Lake Providence	1942-1947
Mary Mims, Minden	1942-
C. B. Hodges, Baton Rouge	1942-1944
Lois J. Lester (Mrs. George), Bains	1942-1949
J. A. Ingram, Boyce	1944-1946
C. A. Ives, Baton Rouge	1945-1950

James T. Enloe, Mansfield	1946-1951
Henry W. Bethard, Jr., Coushatta	1947-1949
Harriet Daggett, Baton Rouge	1949-1953
C. Paul Phelps, Ponchatoula	1950-1952
J. H. Henry, Melrose	1950-
Joel Fletcher, Lafayette	1952-
James L. Love, Hammond	1952-
Mrs. Fensky Terzia	1953-

APPENDIX G

TABLE I

GROWTH AND USE OF THE BOOK COLLECTION AND REFERENCE SERVICES OF THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

Year	Book Collection	Circulation	Special Requests	Reading Certificates Issued
1926	9,618	1,970	300	
1927	14,166	10,388	-	
1928	14,978	2,100	-	
1929	18,871	11,378	2,160	
1930	21,961	72,261	5,186	
1931	23,877	137,965	8,103	
1932	25,555	77,395	10,910	33
1933	26,405	138,409	17,280	306
1934	28,505	101,989	22,408	336
1935	29,071	106,975	25,356	325
1936	29,784	90,315	26,010	274
1937	39,086	215,207	27,024	273
1938	51,932	374,306	35,856	618
1939	79,796	659,344	40,212	732
1940	95,987	815,275	38,332	486
1941	127,078	568,929	39,692	646
1942	144,721	673,836	32,718	590
1943	153,722	420,224	31,830	525
1944	193,740	485,404	40,643	451
1945	233,422	656,885	39,415	663
1946	240,130	587,812	41,911	395
1947	264,410	815,213	48,387	448
1948	294,051	823,282	47,558	457
1949	316,201	1,064,539	45,527	612
1950	330,895	1,018,838	46,355	771
1951	340,730	1,052,589	48,873	1,115
1952	344,635	973,915	45,958	1,521
1953	354,230	866,169	47,493	1,686
1954	362,660	853,985	47,806	1,585
1955	366,902	775,093	49,855	1,463

APPENDIX H

TABLE II

GROWTH AND USE OF THE NEGRO BRANCH OF LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

Year	Book Collection	Registration	Branch Circulation
1943	1,489	141	1,489
1944	1,696	312	3,047
1945	2,633	408	3,204
1946	3,032	511	3,655
1947	3,338	595	3,150
1948	3,770	687	3,389
1949	4,235	1,059	5,724
1950	4,569	1,168	6,397
1951	4,845	1,496	7,238
1952	5,197	1,719	7,933
1953	5,506	1,858	7,681
1954	5,973	2,047	8,650
1955	6,246	2,211	8,778

TABLE III. DEMONSTRATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE LOUISIANA

(Summary based on Records of the Extension Department)

Resolution of Establishment Date	Parish	Demonstration Opening Date	Parish Population (U.S. Census)	Tax Election For Support After Demonstration			Registration During Demonstration	Circulation
				Date	Tax Rate (Mills)	Years		
March 26 9-2-26	Richland Jefferson Davis	April 26, 1926 2-1-27	20,860 10,999	8-23-27	Local Appropriation 1	Failed		26,085
7-17-28	Concordia	10-10-28	12,466	9-19-29	3/4	5		24,887
May 29 1-7-31	Webster Vermilion	10-4-29 2-15-31	7,707 33,684	4-21-36 Closed 1932	1	10	14,732 3,000	1,265,368 76,000
12-31-32	Sabine	1-12-33	24,110	87,800	Appropriation from School Board		6,928	84,583
	Tri Parish:	6-12-37	43,283				17,186	706,006
4-12-37	Winn	6-12-37	14,766	4-16-40	2	5		
4-5-37	Grant	6-12-37	15,709	4-16-40	2	Failed		
5-10-37	Jackson	6-12-37	15,205	4-16-40	2	Failed		
	Lincoln-Bianville	2-1-39	46,611				9,277	210,871
12-5-38	Lincoln	2-1-39	22,822	5-21-40	2	Failed		
3-6-39	Bienville	6-1-39	23,789	1940--	Closed without Election			
3-8-39	Terrebonne	6-10-39	38,477	11-5-40	1	5	7,348	163,629
1-11-39	Morehouse	11-5-39	29,816	11-5-40	1	10	5,248	91,066
4-5-39	Rossier	2-12-40	27,571	9-17-40	1	10	4,415	83,135
7-11-39	Vernilion	9-20-40	33,162	Oct. 4-41--	Appropriation by Police Jury		4,066	77,310
1-31-41	Pointe Coupee	3-2-41	37,750	2-14-42	1	5	7,190	169,713
1-6-41	De Soto	4-27-41	24,004	12-1-41--	Appropriation by Police Jury		3,114	63,963
5-7-41	Rapides	8-7-41	31,803	6-9-42	1	5	3,617	56,283
9-9-41	Calcasieu	1-16-42	73,370	11-5-42	1	5	7,344	135,137
9-7-43	Tangipahoa	4-4-44	56,506	3-20-43	3/4	10	5,643	132,921
10-19-43	Madison	7-20-45	45,519	4-24-45	1-3/4	4	4,920	79,367
8-22-44	Acadia	2-16-45	18,443	2-28-46--	Funds from United Charities		1,914	34,262
11-14-44	Washington	6-15-45	46,260	2-11-46	1/2	2	4,874	88,384
11-14-45	Lafayette	4-27-46	34,443	2-25-47	1-1/2	5	4,621	73,506
4-11-46	Livingston	8-6-46	43,941	5-20-47	2	10	4,745	81,745
6-13-45	State Penitentiary	12-18-46	17,790	9-30-47	3	5	3,302	59,913
6-13-45	Lafourche	1-23-47	33,615	5-10-48	2	10	4,007	84,632
6-14-45	Iberia	5-13-47	37,183	7-13-48	2	10	3,631	84,132
7-10-45	Beauregard	10-26-47	18,847	6-15-48	2	10	2,881	58,392
7-13-45	Evangelina	12-11-47	30,497	10-23-49	1-1/2	3	4,438	95,322
5-8-46	Avoyelles	9-20-48	39,256	4-11-50	2-1/2	5	5,714	119,448
7-1-46	Catahoula	5-22-48	14,618	2-21-50	3-1/2	5	3,336	85,192
8-14-46	Jefferson	7-6-49	50,427	6-20-50	5	10	8,513	119,355
12-19-46	St. Tammany	6-2-50	26,988	3-27-51	2-3/4	10	5,822	68,980
12-3-46	Franklin	11-30-49	29,376	5-8-51	2-1/2	5	4,011	77,765
3-5-47	Claiborne	3-31-51	25,063	2-5-52	1-3/4	5	3,332	51,494
5-13-47	Exterville	9-20-51	26,750	10-28-52	2	10	3,473	66,900
4-15-47	Tensas	1-22-52	13,209	7-29-52	2-1/2	5	1,916	41,926
9-8-47	LaSalle	10-25-52	12,717	6-5-52	2	5	2,945	72,262
3-1-49	Caldwell	7-15-53	10,293	4-13-54	3-1/2	5	2,708	83,017
4-13-49	St. Mary	9-25-53	35,848	6-18-54	2	10	3,249	67,835
10-12-49	East Carroll	6-25-54	16,302	11-2-54	4-1/2	10	2,918	36,150
1-3-50	St. Martin	8-9-55	25,353	3-31-55	4	10	4,112	61,586
11-9-48	St. Charles	4-7-55	13,363	4-24-56	2	10	4,012	72,749

APPENDIX I

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WORKS CONDUCTED BY THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY, FORMERLY THE LOUISIANA LIBRARY COMMISSION

Records of the Extension Department and Financial Records of the Louisiana State Library

Registration During Demonstration	Circulation	Books On Indefinite Loan	Bookmobile	Cost of Demonstration			End of Demonstration
				Local	State	Other	
	26,085	1,820	No	Quarters \$ 1,400.00			
		4,175	No	1,500.00	\$ 1,434.00		Library closed 1927
	24,887	2,442	No	1,250.00	Librarian Salary		October, 1929
14,732	1,285,368	2,108	No	54,194.26	Supervision	Rosewald	Rosewald Grant terminated 1935
3,000	76,000	4,000	No	1,800.00	Salary of Librarian	\$29,497.07	Closed 1932
6,928	84,583	7,146	No	Quarters 1,500.00		Carnegie 4,522.91	
17,186	706,006	18,412	Yes	5,175.00	70,685.91	Dept. of Ed. 10,000.00	
			Yes	Quarters			June 30, 1940
			Yes				Closed April 23, 1940
9,277	220,872	8,539	Yes	1,473.00	28,763.07		Closed after Second Tax Election [failed, November 5, 1940]
			Yes				May, 1940
7,348	163,629	7,999	Yes	1,500.00	21,127.03		August, 1940
5,268	91,066	7,112	Yes	Quarters	14,386.51		December 31, 1940
4,413	83,135	6,913	Yes	1,334.00	15,731.73		November 31, 1940
4,066	77,310	5,891	Yes	1,500.00	15,875.69		February 28, 1941
7,390	169,713	10,003	Yes	1,750.00	17,236.94		October 31, 1941
3,114	63,963	5,936	Yes	704.00	15,439.83		April 30, 1942
3,617	56,283	7,154	Yes	811.00	14,617.58		April 30, 1942
7,344	135,137	28,446	Yes	3,000.00	35,829.82		August 8, 1942
5,643	132,921	25,421	No	3,803.57	46,453.39		January 31, 1943
4,920	79,367	18,397	No	1,500.00	43,339.11		July 31, 1943
1,914	34,262	6,596	No	13,022.92	17,123.70		May 31, 1945
4,874	88,384	15,348	No	3,025.85	35,003.81		July 31, 1945
4,621	73,806	10,773	No	2,515.00	27,099.95		February 28, 1946
4,745	61,745	12,456	No	2,500.00	30,524.79		June 30, 1946
3,302	59,913	8,028	Yes	1,500.00	21,585.91		May 1, 1947
	28,339	2,261					August 31, 1947
4,007	84,832	12,944	Yes	4,050.00	29,716.20		December, 1947
3,631	84,132	11,399	Yes	7,000.00	36,138.25		Closed January 31, 1948
2,881	58,392	7,459	Yes	6,895.54	24,376.28		May 31, 1948
4,638	95,332	10,517	Yes	6,500.00	30,656.85		October 31, 1948
5,714	119,448	13,758	Yes	5,666.73	43,751.84		May 31, 1950
3,336	85,192	7,541	Yes	3,500.00	28,300.63		July 30, 1950
8,513	119,355	20,082	Yes	16,189.44	66,164.39		November 31, 1950
5,852	68,980	10,079	Yes	4,780.00	34,053.82		May, 1951
4,011	51,494	9,505	Yes	5,618.11	31,537.74		December 31, 1951
3,332	77,763	9,113	Yes	9,429.00	31,186.11		March 31, 1952
3,473	66,900	9,675	Yes	9,865.20	31,427.74		September 30, 1952
1,916	41,926	6,456	Yes	6,000.00	26,903.51		January 31, 1953
2,945	72,242	7,834	Yes	9,964.85	22,992.62		November 24, 1953
2,708	83,017	7,182	Yes	7,057.63	28,571.18		July 3, 1954
3,249	67,835	9,501	Yes	12,829.00	34,451.71		October 31, 1954
1,918	36,150	8,658	Yes	9,318.33	33,059.41		June 30, 1955
4,112	61,586	10,263	Yes	15,410.00	28,531.94		January 31, 1956
4,012	72,749	8,590	Yes	12,000.00	34,409.20		August 31, 1956

APPENDIX J

PARTIAL LIST OF FOREIGN VISITORS TO

LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

~~Gladys Oppenheim~~, Public Library, Openbare Biblioteek, Bloemfontein. 1938.

Hildamar Escalante, Caracas, Venezuela. 1941.

Major Charles Sanderson, Canada. 1944.

Margaret J. Clay, Victoria, B. C. 1946.

Francoise Gaston Cherau, Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris, France. 1946.

Paule Nancel-Penard, Bibliotheque Municipale, LeHavre, France. 1946.

Jean Arnot, Sydney Library, New South Wales. 1949.

Johanna Woolf, Holland.

Hanns W. Eppelsheimer, Ln. of City University, Frankfurt, Germany.

Czeslaw Koziol, Warsaw, Poland. 1949.

R. F. M. Immelman, University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, Cape Town, South Africa. 1949.

Miss Bernardo, Philippines.

Miss L. A. Fadel, Egypt.

Miss Afriat, Morocco.

Prasong Witaya, Bangkok, Thailand. 1950.

Miss Lada Sibunruang, Bangkok, Thailand. 1950.

Sheik Mohammed Bashia, Malaya. 1950.

Elizabeth Poppelbaum, Public Library, Munich, Germany.
1951.

Phyllis Corner, Public Library, New South Wales,
Sydney. 1951.

J. D. A. Collier, State Librarian, Tasmania, Aus-
tralia. 1951.

Rita Wulfing, Schedestrass 7, Bonn, Germany. 1951.

Constancia de Jesus, Manila, Philippines. 1952.

Waltraut Bender, Libn., Regensburg Branch, Bavarian
State Library, Regensburg, Germany. 1952.

Marga Beehmer-Plitt, Libn., Br. Library, Hamburg,
Germany. 1952.

Herbert Fenske, Head Libn., Hamburg-Wilhelmsburg
District Lib., Hamburg Public Library. 1952.

Herman Sauter, Chief Libn., Pfaelzische State Lib.,
Speyer, Germany. 1952.

German Garcia, Libn., Bernardino Rivadavia Library,
Bahia Blanca, Argentina. 1954.

Charles Arning, British Consulate General, 1022
National Bank of Commerce, New Orleans, Louisiana. 1954.

A. G. W. Dunningham, New Zealand (City Libn., Dunedin).
1954.

Kai-Uwe Von Hassel, Member of the Bundestagg, Petersen-
Allee 7, Gluecksburg, Germany. 1954.

Etelvina Lima, Biblioteca Publice de Minas Gerais,
Belo Horizonte, Brazil. 1956.

Hester Macaskill, National Library Service, Willington,
New Zealand. 1955.

G. Karmaloedin Arang, Coordinator of Libraries, Indo-
nesia. 1956.

APPENDIX K

POLICIES AND CONDITIONS FOR LIBRARY DEMONSTRATIONS

LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

I. INTRODUCTION.

Since 1925, when the Louisiana Library Commission--later, the Louisiana State Library--began to operate, public library coverage for the State was planned through the "demonstration" method, with the parish or a region of two or more parishes being chosen as the library unit. Under this program of library development, state aid is given in a selected area in such concentration as to encourage local responsibility for library service.

A demonstration library is a sample of library service. The State Library brings thousands of new books into a parish and sets up a parish-wide system of headquarters library, branches and bookmobile stops, so that no resident has to go far for the books he wants and needs.

The State Library operates the library for a year's demonstration, bearing the larger part of the expense. Before the end of the demonstration period if the service is to continue, local support must be assured.

II. GENERAL POLICIES.

A. Choice of Demonstration Area.

1. Local interest and leadership apparent.
2. Reasonable likelihood of library continuance after demonstration.

B. Legal Establishment.

1. Library established by legal ordinance (Act 36 of 1926). Police Jury requests library demonstration from State Library and acknowledges its

moral obligation to continue the service after the demonstration.

2. Library board appointed with terms extending beyond demonstration.

C. Definite Terminal Point to Demonstration.

1. One year shall be the length of the demonstration period with knowledge of this definite terminal point clearly understood by all parties.

III. CONDITIONS FOR DEMONSTRATION LIBRARIES.

A. Size of Demonstration.

1. A demonstration shall not be established in an area less than a parish.

B. Population Served.

1. Service shall be provided for all residents irrespective of race. Service throughout the area begins simultaneously. Direct school service shall be given only under terms of contract and with funds provided from school sources.

C. Obligations of Local Governing Bodies.

1. The police jury provides library quarters and their maintenance (utilities), furniture, shelving, equipment, salaries of part-time workers, salary of bookmobile driver, building and office supplies, and janitorial service.

D. State Library Responsibilities.

1. The State Library provides all books and magazines, some library supplies, a bookmobile and its operational costs, travel expenses for staff, salaries of full-time and professional librarians.

E. Library Personnel.

1. An independent parish or regional system by library law must be administered by a professional librarian, either holding a certificate from the Louisiana Board of Library Examiners or eligible for such a certificate.
2. It is desirable to have a second trained librarian in any parish system.
3. All demonstration library staff, including

local library workers, are appointed by the State Library.

4. The State Library, as director of the project, gives it supervision constantly during the demonstration.

F. Library Resources.

1. One-third of a book per capita, or more, is provided each demonstration, sent in a large initial shipment of never less than 6,000 volumes, plus frequent and regular supplementary shipments of new or specially requested material throughout the demonstration. All books are completely processed and ready for immediate library use.
2. Magazines and newspapers are provided branches and bookmobile.
3. The Reference and Loan Department of the State Library supplements the book collection of the demonstration by lending requested material. Films are available by loan from the Film Department.

G. Library Board of Control.

1. By law, the Board of Control is composed of 5 parish residents, plus the police jury president as an ex-officio member. This Board represents the Police Jury in all library matters.
2. During demonstration this board works closely with the State Library and is consulted on selection of local personnel, branch locations, bookmobile routes, etc. It is influential in interpreting the library to the parish community; its chief obligation is to work for permanent local financial support to continue the library service at the end of the demonstration.
3. Before library opening, the board organizes, names its officers, adopts by-laws for its proceedings. It meets throughout the demonstration in accordance with these by-laws.

IV. A LOCALLY-CONTROLLED AND LOCALLY-SUPPORTED LIBRARY

- A. Before demonstration's end, the police jury shall make effort to provide for the continuation of library service.
 1. Budget for second year operation is prepared by

librarian and presented to the jury by the library board. Required financial support shall continue the service on the same scale, or normally expanded scale, as developed during the demonstration year.

2. Local funds for library continuation shall come from either a specially voted library tax or from annual appropriation from the jury.
-
- B. Demonstration personnel may be retained by the library board. The board is required by law to employ a certified librarian as administrator who recommends other staff members to the board for appointment.
 - C. State books may remain in the local library on indefinite loan as may the bookmobile until it can be replaced by one purchased with local funds.
 - D. Direct supervision of the State Library is removed, though advisory service is given on request; and the new local library is required by law to submit annual reports to the state library agency.
-

APPENDIX L

REGULATIONS OF THE STATE BOARD OF LIBRARY EXAMINERS

The State Board of Library Examiners issues two types of certificates:

1. Executive
2. Temporary

Requirements to be met by candidates for Executive certificates are:

- a. They must have a baccalaureate degree
- b. They must have professional training, culminating in a degree (either a second Bachelor's degree, as a B.S. in L.S. or a master's degree with at least one academic year of library science) representing a minimum of five years of study beyond secondary school level.
- c. The professional content of such programs may be arranged differently within the five-year period but shall represent a minimum of one academic year.
- d. Three years' executive experience in a library of recognized standing.

Candidates for temporary certificates must have all of the above qualifications except the years of executive experience. Such certificates are issued by the Board only as emergency measures. It is expected that individuals holding temporary certificates will qualify for executive certificates within three years.

Candidates must attain a grade of at least 75 in the examination to be granted a certificate.

The subjects on which the examination is given are:

- a. Library Science and techniques.
- b. Library conditions and laws in Louisiana and in general.
- c. Personality and fitness.

Subjects "a" and "b" will be given both orally and in writing.

The oral examination will include an interview with the candidate, and will be given on the same day as written. This interview and the written statements from reference supplied by the candidates, will be used as a basis of a candidate's score on "c."

Application blanks for permission to take the examination may be obtained from the Department of Occupational Standards, State Capitol, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

At the time of application for the examination, all applicants for certificates as librarians shall pay a fee of \$5.00 to defray the expenses of the Board, as required by Act 36 of 1926.

Announcement of examinations will be made at least two months before each examination is to be given, and all applications for that examination must be on file in the Department of Occupational Standards not later than a month before the date of the examination. In an emergency, with special permission of the Board, if circumstances are extenuating, a candidate may be permitted to take the examination, if his application is received after the announced date.

~~The Board reserves the right to cancel any announced examination if fewer than three candidates signify their desire to appear.~~

Any certificate may be revoked for cause.

An Executive Certificate is issued for five years, and is renewable if the holder of same is serving in a satisfactory administrative capacity in a city, parish or state library position.

A Temporary Certificate may be changed to an Executive Certificate without the necessity of another examination if the holder completes the prescribed amount of executive experience in a public library of recognized standing.

APPENDIX M

STATUS OF CERTIFICATES ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD OF

LIBRARY EXAMINERS--1955

Executive Certificate Holders	Expiration Date
Abramson, Debora R.	October 24, 1956
Adams, Kathryn	November 17, 1955
Arceneaux, Lucille A.	November 8, 1959
Cammack, Elizabeth	November 8, 1959
Catha, Maude	November 14, 1957
Cooper, Lola Mae	October 16, 1958
Cotton, Eunice H.	November 14, 1957
Culver, Essae Martha	October 24, 1956
De Graauw, Cleo S.	October 24, 1956
Farrell, Sallie J.	November 17, 1955
Ferguson, George Rose	October 24, 1956
Flanders, Frances Vivian	November 8, 1959
Giraud, Mary Louise	November 14, 1957
Gueymard, Margaret R.	November 17, 1955
Hanks, Rubie M.	October 16, 1958
Harris, Mary Walton	October 24, 1956
Haupt, Clara S.	November 8, 1959
Jacobs, John Hall	November 8, 1959
Jones, Sarah Irwin	October 24, 1956
Jones, Lou Venia G.	November 17, 1955
Lessel, Dorris	November 14, 1957
Lyle, Lellah	October 16, 1958
McGinnis, C. Kay W.	October 24, 1956
Mitchell, Elizabeth B.	November 8, 1959
Mitchell, Mary Moore	October 24, 1956
Moore, Jewell	October 16, 1958
Paul, Eloise B.	October 24, 1956
Peterson, Edith	November 14, 1957
Reed, Emily	November 17, 1955
Schenker, Tillie A.	October 24, 1956
Seab, Willie Mae	October 24, 1956
Sellers, Jeanne P.	November 8, 1959
Spencer, Emily L.	October 16, 1958

Taylor, Marion	November 17, 1955
Vaughan, Bess	November 8, 1959
Wellman, Murrell C.	November 14, 1957
Wilkins, Mary V. McD.	November 8, 1959
Williams, Elizabeth	November 17, 1955
Young, Lucile E.	November 8, 1959

Temporary Certificate
Holders

Expiration Date

Batson, Ann K.	November 14, 1955
Bennett, William C.	November 14, 1955
Bodker, Adele	October 16, 1956
Boone, Inez	November 8, 1957
Clark, Alma Lee	November 14, 1955
Dixon, Thelma B.	October 16, 1956
Lefkovits, Ruth	November 8, 1957
Moore, Celia C.	November 14, 1955
Perkins, Marcia W.	November 14, 1955
Sockrider, Hazel G.	November 8, 1957
Tilley, Mary Ellen	November 8, 1957
Walsworth, Margaret W.	October 16, 1956

VITA

The writer, Shirley Knowles Stephenson, was born in Jackson, Mississippi on October 31, 1907. She received her elementary education in Jackson and attended secondary school in Fort Smith, Arkansas, where she was graduated in 1924.

The writer attended Millsaps College in Jackson, Mississippi. She then became a student assistant in the Newcomb College Library in New Orleans, Louisiana and attended Tulane University. She received her B.A. in Education degree from Tulane University in 1932.

In 1933, the writer became a member of the faculty of the Public School System of Jackson, Mississippi. She was employed during 1933-1935 as a classroom teacher and then became supervisor of elementary school libraries. In 1938 she became librarian of the Bailey Junior High School of Jackson, Mississippi.

Joining the staff of the New Orleans Public Library in 1939, the writer served as an information assistant in the main library and then was placed in charge of the Alvar Branch of the New Orleans Public Library.

The writer attended the Library School of Louisiana State University during four summer sessions and received a B.S. degree in Library Science in 1940.

In 1941, the writer became a member of the professional staff of the Mississippi W. P. A. Library Extension Project. She was appointed State Supervisor of the Library Project in 1942.

She became an instructor on the faculty of the Louisiana State University in 1943 and taught in the Library School and the Books and Libraries Department of the University.

The writer received her M.A. degree from Louisiana State University in 1953. She became a candidate for the doctorate in 1956.

The writer is currently teaching in the Library School of Louisiana State University.

EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Harriet K. Stephenson

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: A History of the Louisiana State Library

Approved:

Redaughline
Major Professor and Chairman

Richard J. Russell
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

L. L. Kulmer

W. A. Lawrence

Harris McCallister

Flavence Morton

D. P. Neah

M. W. Smith

Date of Examination:

July 24, 1957